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VOL. 26, NO. 34 • APRIL 19-25, 2017

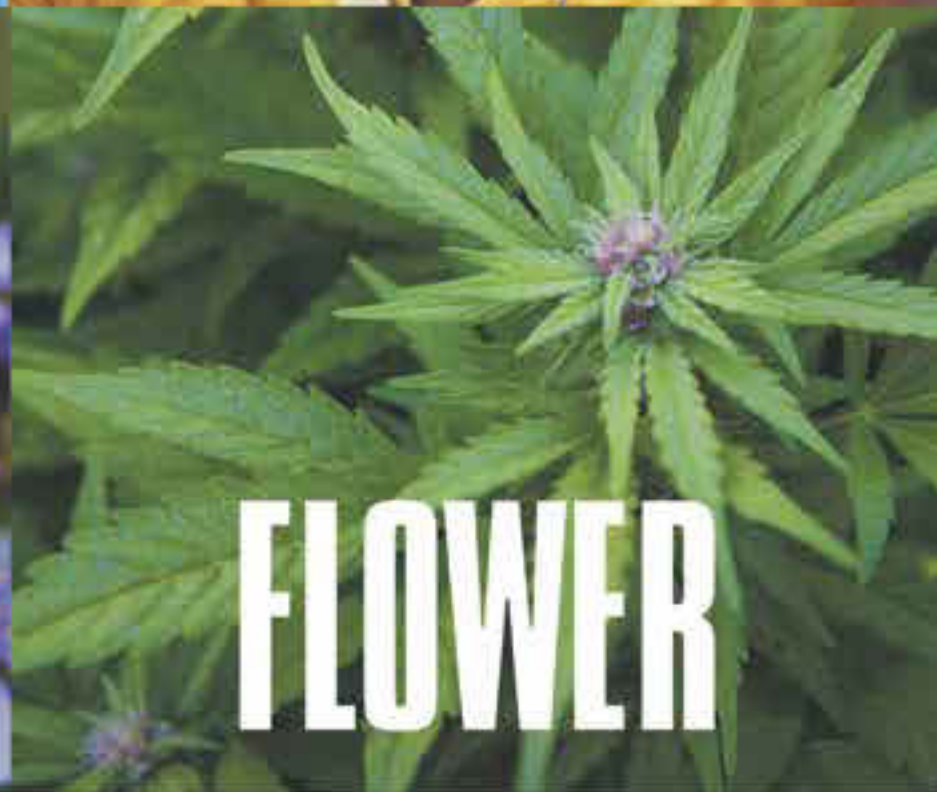
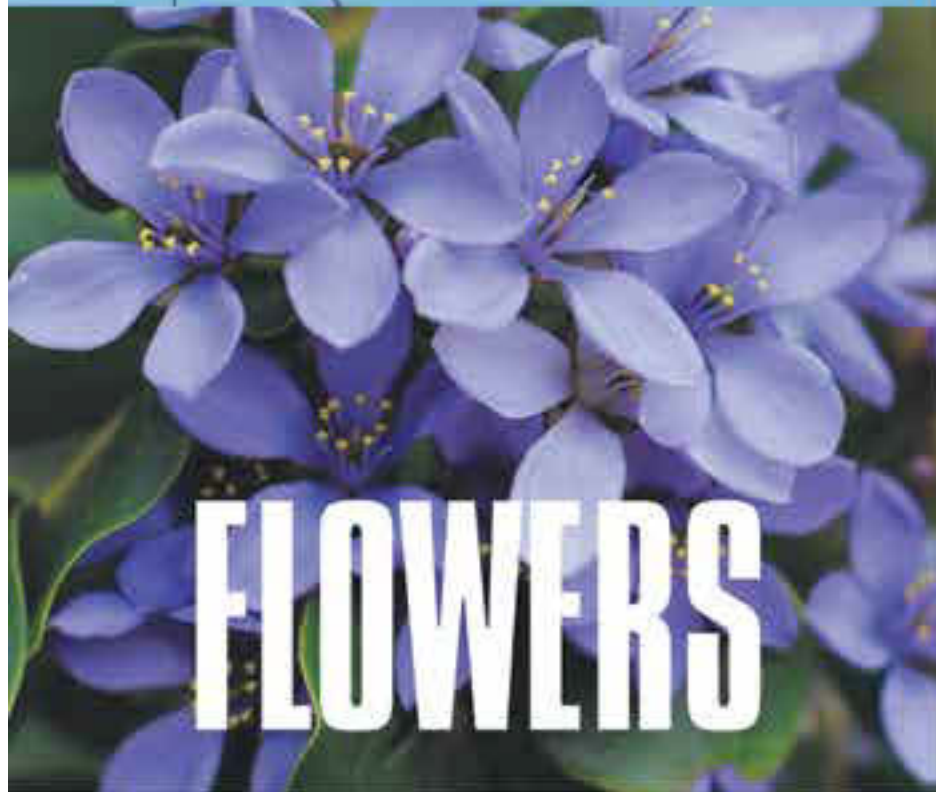
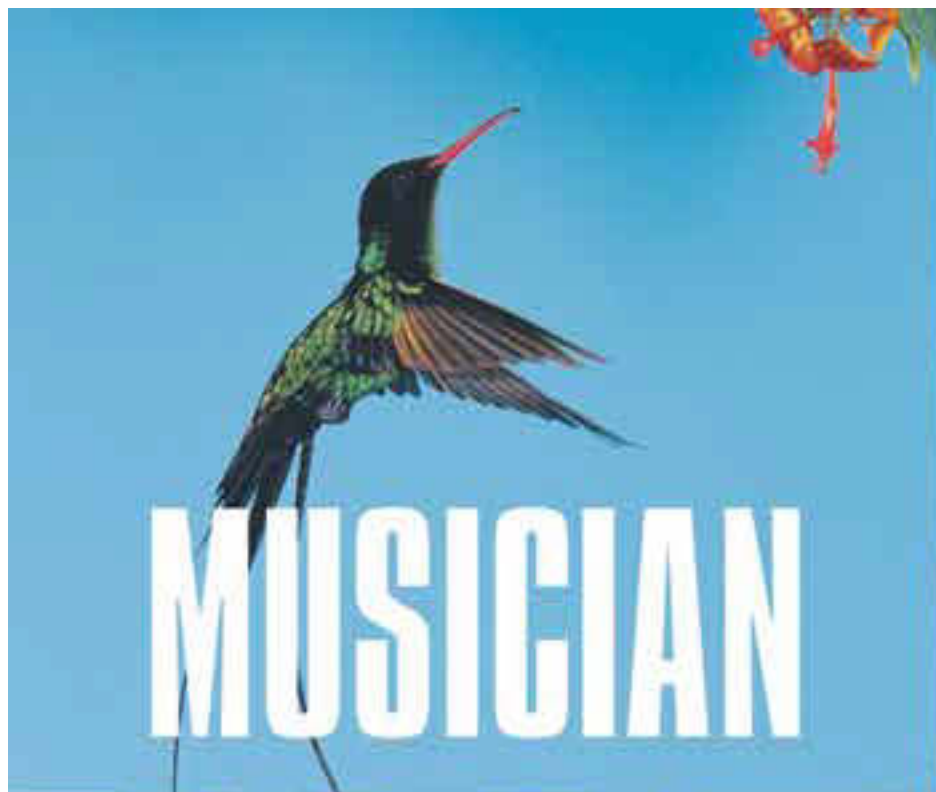
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the Stranger

THE SPOKANE ISSUE

THE UNBEARABLE WHITENESS OF BEING RACHEL DOLEZAL BY IJEOMA OLUO P. 16
NEWS MEET THE POLITICIAN WHO WANTS TO TURN EASTERN WASHINGTON BLUE P. 9
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MUSIC RECORD STORES ARE ALIVE AND WELL IN SPOKANE P. 45

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the Stranger

Volume 26, Issue Number 34
April 19–25, 2017



COVER ART

The Pavilion at Riverfront Park in Spokane,
photo by SKODONNELL/GETTY

SPOKANE ISSUE

Stranger staffers converged on Spokane to eat, drink, and learn about our state's eastern city.

OPEN CITY

What it's like to Tinder in Spokane; Letter to the editor: Please don't come to Spokane; covert flirt ... page 6

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Luke Baumgarten and Ginger Ewing moved back to Spokane to start their careers—instead, they created a community ... page 54

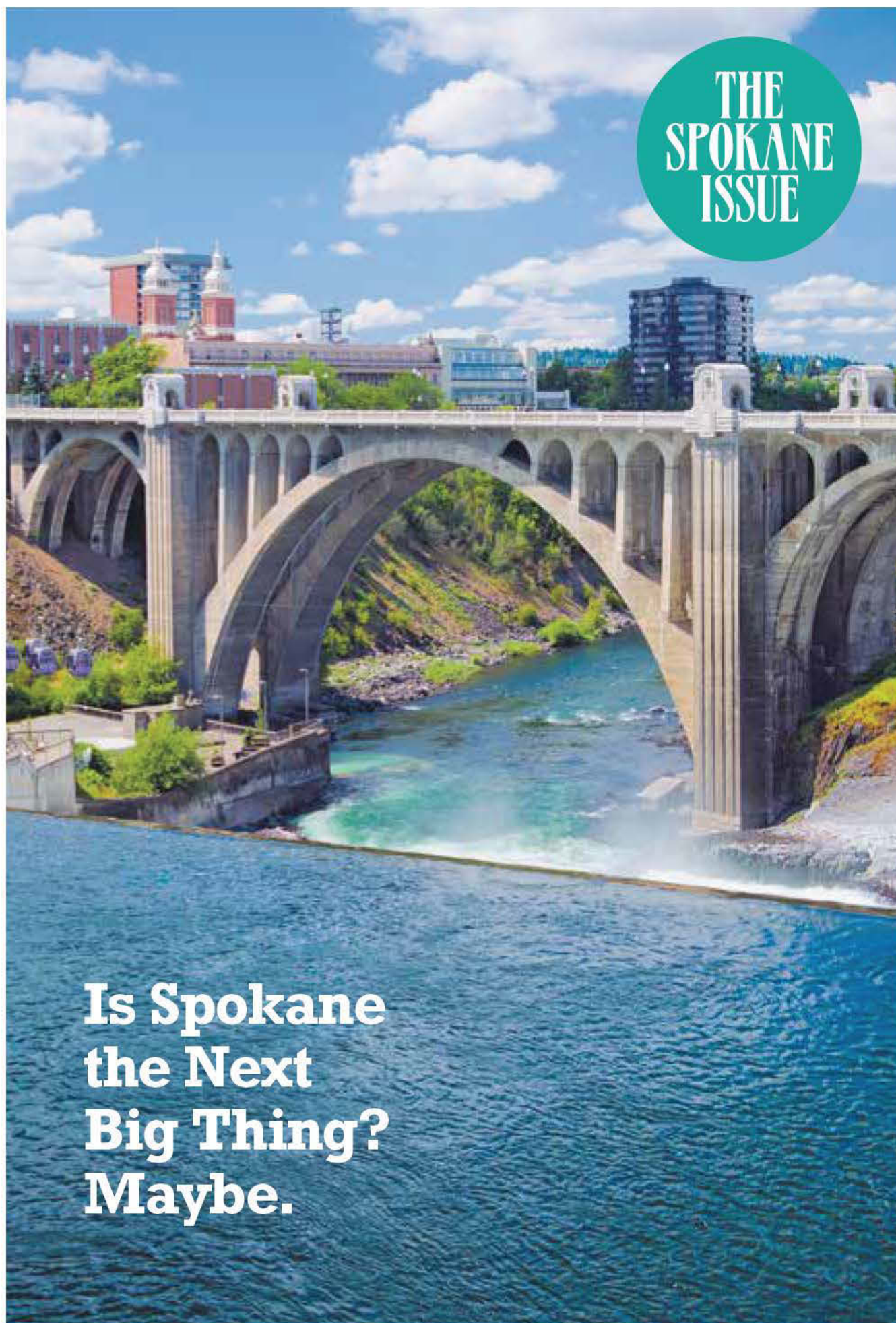
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Is Spokane the Next Big Thing? Maybe.

“Economic refugees.”

That's what this week's Person of Interest, Luke Baumgarten, the cofounder of the arts organization Terrain, called people who were fleeing Seattle for Spokane, especially the artists who have struggled to pay \$1,000-plus rents in this city.

Tacoma might be the next one up to be invaded in Washington State, but we're looking ahead, far ahead—and east, to Spokane. Between 2000 and 2010, Spokane's population has grown 6.8 percent according to the US Census. The median home price in Spokane is \$160,000 (in Seattle it's \$624,000), and there's just enough to do to not be bored. Spokane has a walkable downtown, plenty of bars and clubs, independent movie theaters and bookstores, and its restaurants—like Seattle's—are getting more sophisticated by the day. As a Lyft driver told me, “It's got some big-city trappings without big-city problems.”

No wonder, then, a group of artists and writers living in Spokane didn't want us to write about it. An artist/writer who left Seattle for Spokane wrote us an e-mail (see page 6), cosigned by 13 other

Spokanites, warning us to stay away.

“Please do not come here. Your attention is unwanted and poses many potential problems. The content you publish could do *actual* harm to the people who *actually* live here,” they wrote.

**“It's got some
big-city
trappings
without
big-city
problems.”**

Though this letter enlisted the language of social justice to articulate the objection to *The Stranger's* attentions, the subtext was perfectly clear. When they said we “could do actual harm,” presumably they meant we could ruin their sweet deal.

Well, *actually*, we totally ruined it. We came, we Tindered, we ate, we interviewed, we met Rachel Dolezal, we drank, we shopped for records, we talked, we learned, and then we left. What did we learn? That contrary to years of derisive comments among Seattle arrivistes, Spokane is a perfectly lovely place to visit and it seems poised to be a perfectly fine place to live. Scoff all you want. If Seattle keeps going the way it's going, a lot of us are going to need somewhere to flee to.

Did we mention it's really sunny? (TRICIA ROMANO)

GREGOR BAGEL/GETTY



OPEN CITY

THE
SPOKANE
ISSUE

Swiping Right in Spokane

BY TRICIA ROMANO

We pulled into Spokane, and I did the first thing I always do when I get to a new city: I opened Tinder and started swiping. It's an anthropological experiment (or at least that's what I tell myself). In Copenhagen, the men are square-jawed and straightforward and direct. In New York, they are either stylish metrosexuals or guidos from Jersey who wear wraparound shades and message aggressively. In Seattle, they are very wan, very passive, and very meh.

Since I was the only one of the *Stranger* crew who had my own hotel room, I got to work and started swiping left and right.

I'd set my parameters to get men from 30 to 43—and I was now seeing so many pictures of children, I thought I was looking at an ad for a day-care center. Apparently, there are a lot of single fathers in Spokane, and they put their kids front and center in their profiles, which I found both inappropriate and also charming.

Also, guns: so many guns. In the main profile photos and secondary pictures, there were images of men holding guns and shooting guns—rifles, handguns, guns I'm not equipped to identify. One guy just had a photo of an unloaded gun with magazines as his main image.

I was expecting to be swimming in a sea of red MAGA hats, but the ratio of conservatives to hipsters did not appear to be as high as I had anticipated. I did come across a gentleman who had a profile picture of *Duck Dynasty* that read, "We Stand with Phil," and who sported a ZZ Top beard. (Dan Savage's advice: "Don't marry him right away.") I did not swipe right.

After an hour, I had actually managed to swipe through all of Spokane. Tinder panic, which I had not experienced for a long time in Seattle, set in. There was no one left, and I felt terrible on behalf of the women and men of Spokane. A friend who flits between Spokane and Seattle confirmed that pickings are slim, especially if you aren't Christian and conservative. There are fewer men than women in Spokane (48.8 percent to 51.2 percent, according to US Census data) and a higher percentage of both single men and

women with children than in Seattle.

Surprisingly, Spokane's Tinder appeared to be more racially diverse than Seattle's. Though only 2 percent of Spokane's 210,000 population is black, the ratio of men of color seemed to be much higher than the numbers would indicate. I swiped right and wondered: Does the algorithm know something about the desires of white women in Spokane versus the desires of white women in Seattle?

After an hour of not getting any matches, and feeling dejected, I started matching. One guy who "wasn't looking for hookups" clarified that he had only written that he was Italian in his bio so that he could explain he had a "big wang." Another didn't really drink but would have met me for a date at the gym. I didn't have any gym clothes, so I couldn't meet him.

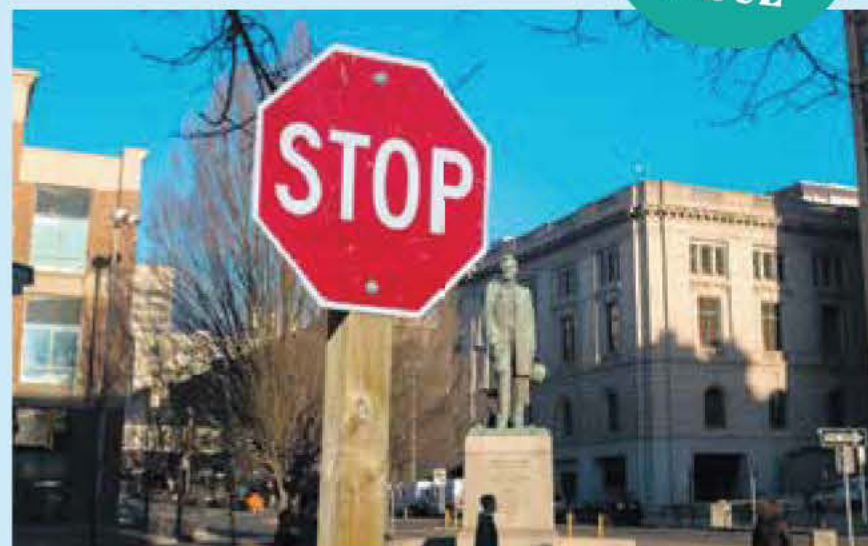
Finally, I began to message with one person who didn't seem insane. He's an artist and works as a counselor for children. He's been in Spokane for 13

years, with a stint on Capitol Hill in Seattle. We made a last-minute date and met at an empty wine bar downtown. Spokane is small enough that earlier in the evening he had actually been at the restaurant the *Stranger* writers had intended to go to. We made small talk, and he gamely told me about Spokane and how the art scene has grown over the last decade, going from something that was straining for credibility to one that's burgeoning and almost exciting.

He told me how he bought a house for \$70,000 in 2009 or 2010, and it's worth a little more now. He has a couple of part-time jobs and that's okay. He can do art and photography and raise a kid in Spokane, and traf-

fic is nearly nonexistent, and it's enough of a city, but not really. He called it a country-city. This seemed accurate.

It was late and the *Stranger* crew had driven all day and I was tired. The streets were nearly empty. He offered to walk me to my next destination, and I felt the air get crisper and colder as the minutes passed. "We have four seasons here," he explained as the Lyft pulled up. We hugged. I got another message from him when I got back to the room. We're following each other on Instagram. ■



Editor's note: This is an actual e-mail we received. We did not make this up.

To: Sean Nelson, Tricia Romano
Subject: Spokane Issue

Hello Sean & Tricia,
Yesterday a reporter with *The Stranger* (Amber Cortes) contacted me regarding a Spokane issue-in-the-works, saying she reached out to me because I used to live in Seattle and now reside in Spokane. (My grandparents have lived here since the 1940s, and I moved here to be with them.)

Regardless of any good intentions or fresh angles behind a Spokane issue of *The Stranger*, many folks here (especially in the creative community) are justifiably concerned about the negative effects that a Seattle-spotlighting-Spokane *Stranger* issue could have on us.

Simply put: Please do not come here. Your attention is unwanted and poses many potential problems. The content you publish could do actual harm to the people who actually live here.

Below is a list of folks who feel similarly. The list will continue to grow.

I'm happy to answer any questions you have; feel free to write or even call. However, I do not consent to having my name appear in print.

[REDACTED]
[XXX.XXX.XXXX]

Cosigned:	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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I, ANONYMOUS

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Hi there. I'm the beardy guy, balding a bit, kind of a fit dad type. You're the cute skinny guy who looks kind of like Oscar Isaac with glasses. When I walked out of the restaurant, you banged on the glass to get my attention, and when I looked up at you, you made a heart with your hands, you pointed at me, and you mouthed "I love you." I want you to know that had I been single, or had I not agreed with my partner to be monogamous, I would have walked back inside and gotten your phone number. I've spent years getting back in shape. I've lost weight, I've changed how I dress, I've gotten my confidence back. It's been a long time since I've been hit on, and an even longer time since I've been hit on by someone so hot, and it was one of the nicest things that's happened to me in a while. Thank you.

—Anonymous



STEVEN WEISSMAN

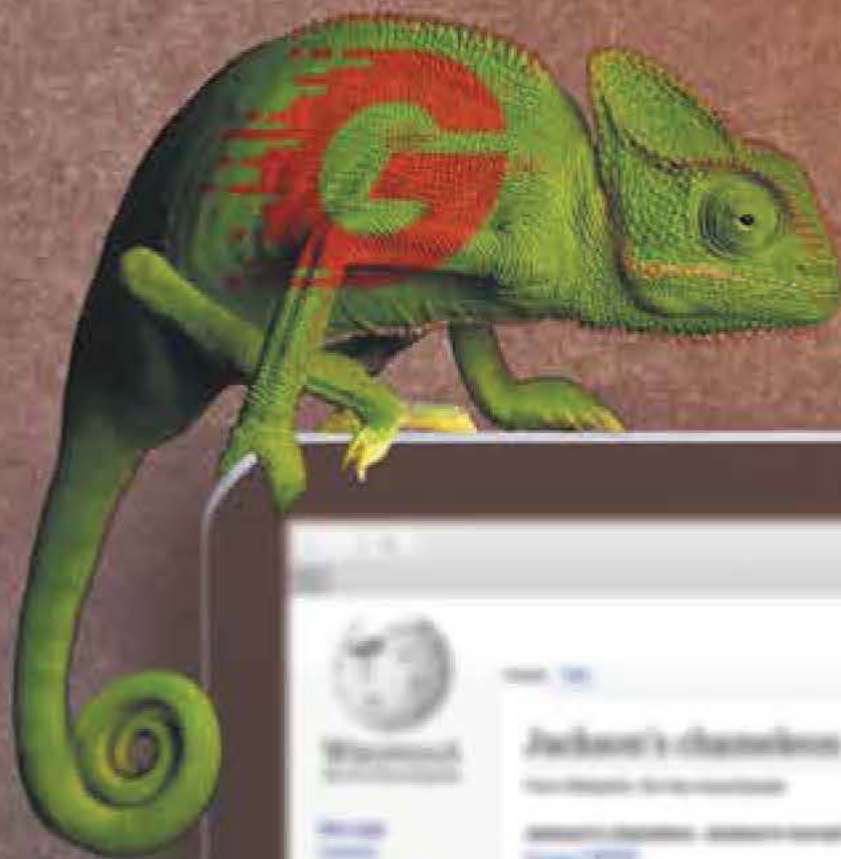
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(4/21) Paul Hawken
100 Ways to Reverse Global Warming

(4/22) Town Green Day of Service
Restoring the Washington Park
Arboretum

(4/22) Saturday Family Concerts
Kevin Connor and **Swing 3PO**

(4/22) Artist in Residence
Elisa Chavez
Scratch Night: Nerds & Nazis

(4/22) Earshot Jazz and Town Hall
Global Rhythms present
Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares

(4/23) Scholar in Residence
Marcus Harrison Green
Scratch Night:
'Caucasians Anonymous'

(4/24) Elisabeth Rosenthal
The American Healthcare Crisis

(4/24) Scott Simon
'My Cubs: A Love Story'

(4/25) Leslie Stahl
with **Tony Ventrella**
'Becoming Grandma'

(4/25) Elliott Bay Book Company
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Stephen Tobolowsky

(4/26) Building Tour of Town Hall

(4/26) Plymouth Church UCC,
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An Evening with **Anne Lamott**

(4/26) Alex Daly
The Secrets of Crowdsourcing

(4/27) Mary Lou Sanelli
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THE SPOKANE ISSUE



BEN STUCKART Progressives from Spokane to Pomeroy are putting their hopes in the 45-year-old city council member.

RAJAH ROSE

Meet the Man Who Could Turn Eastern Washington Blue

Rural Americans Like That Donald Trump “Says It Like It Is.”
Can a Plainspoken Spokane Democrat Win Them Over?

BY HEIDI GROOVER

Congressional candidate Ben Stuckart is snoring from the back seat of his campaign manager’s SUV. We wind through the rolling green and brown hills of Eastern Washington, passing livestock, farmhouses, two big Trump/Pence banners, and one homemade red-and-white sign that reads, “Hey crooked news media, stop lying to us.”

When he wakes up, Stuckart stares out the window. “That’s a mangy cow,” he mutters out of nowhere. Soon we arrive in Pomeroy, a dusty time capsule that’s home to 1,425 people.

Stuckart, the 45-year-old two-term progressive president of the Spokane City Council, is hoping to unseat six-term Republican congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, a staunch defender of President Donald Trump who consistently wins 60 percent victories in her Eastern Washington district. No Democrat has held her seat since 1994. Stuckart wants to change that, so he’s in Pomeroy a full 19 months before the 2018 election.

His town hall with the local Democratic Party must happen before nightfall. The Garfield County Democrats meet in an unused storefront on Pomeroy’s main street that has no electricity, and you can’t talk agricultural policy in the dark.

We pull into town and spot the meeting place on our left, a faded American flag banner in the window. Stuckart’s campaign manager notices there’s already a small crowd gathered for the town hall. “They’re

excited to see you, Ben,” he says.

“How am I supposed to have a cigarette before we go in if there are already people there?” Stuckart says.

We drive past, round a corner, and pull into the empty parking lot of the post office. Stuckart, clean-shaven in a gray suit but no tie, takes drags from a Camel—his fourth since we hit the road in Spokane that morning—then puts it out on the SUV’s back tire.

When the candidate walks up to the meeting spot, he sees a dozen elderly white people from across Eastern Washington gathered to hear him speak. Inside, mismatched office chairs line the edges of the room. Random area rugs cover the wood floors. On one of the alarmingly bright purple walls, a poster shouts, “PUSSY GRABS BACK.”

Stuckart takes a seat right under the pussy poster. The head of the county Democrats introduces him as “Ben Stuckland,” and Stuckart has to correct him.

“The reason we lost as Democrats in the fall,” Stuckart tells the small crowd forcefully, “is that we didn’t admit that there are problems. A lot of us said to ourselves, ‘The Obama years were great.’” But, Stuckart says, income inequality persists. He speaks faster and faster, clipping his sentences before they’re finished, leaning forward in his chair.

“We tried to recover,” Stuckart says, “but

it was a slow recovery. People want bold answers, but they want to hear the truth... How are we going to attack income inequality if we can’t honestly recognize and have empathy with everybody out there and understand what their problems are?”

Stuckart poses the biggest threat to Republicans in Eastern Washington in a long time. He is the first elected official with significant name recognition to take on McMorris Rodgers for the 5th Congressional District from the left. Like Donald Trump, he’s fluent in “say it like it is” rhetoric. Like Bernie Sanders, he appeals to his supporters not in spite of his particular unpolished brand but because of it. He is a rare authentic politician—and whether or not that’s rehearsed, it resonates.

Of voters, Stuckart says, “If they think you’re actually full of shit and you’re making up answers that aren’t aligned with your values, then I think that’s where you get in a situation where we’ve seen lots of politicians who—they’re just another politician.”

While some Republicans distance themselves from Trump, McMorris Rodgers, the fourth highest ranking Republican in the US House of Representatives, has been a fierce defender of the president and

his policies. She earned 100 percent on FiveThirtyEight’s Trump score, which measures how often members of Congress vote with the president.

To unseat his opponent, Stuckart hopes to capitalize on anti-Trump anger, if it lasts. Progressives in Spokane are hopeful. Jim Dawson, the Spokane-based program director at Fuse, a statewide organizing group that endorsed Stuckart in his last run for city council, says his name recognition and campaign experience make him viable.

“Ben is a progressive, but he is very plainspoken,” Dawson says. “His ability to connect with people and be straightforward makes him more trustworthy in people’s eyes.”

Fuse recently hosted a so-called “empty seat” town hall in downtown Spokane for McMorris Rodgers. Like other Republican members of Congress, she has refused to hold a large meeting with constituents since the election. Still, 800 people came that day.

“We’ve never seen anything like this,” Dawson says of the anger at McMorris Rodgers.

In Pomeroy, Pat Bates, who traveled about 40 minutes from Clarkston to get to the town hall, excitedly greets Stuckart. The new candidate only recently popped up on her radar, and he’s already the best option. “He’s going to run against Cathy!” she tells me. “Yay! We’ve been working so hard [to unseat her].” Bates says the district is home to a lot of poor seniors who are “very, very needy.”

“All the things Cathy votes for would ►

Like Bernie Sanders, Stuckart’s appeal is not in spite of his unpolished brand but because of it.

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RAJAH BOSE

“be against us,” she says. (By press time, McMorris Rodgers had not responded to a request for comment for this article.)

After a weekend of events in rural areas, Stuckart hosts his first town hall in Spokane. Leading up to it, the Spokane County GOP creates a new page on its website—“Stop Stuckart!”—warning about his “Seattle style socialist policies.” The site arms local Republicans with questions for the town hall.

“You admitted to using marijuana in the past and have said you planned to use it again,” one question reads, citing Stuckart’s comments to a Spokane newspaper. “Marijuana is currently federally illegal—do you plan to continue using marijuana if elected to Congress?”

Stuckart is an unapologetic liberal, but he’s not exactly a Seattle socialist. As a city council member, he’s been endorsed by both the state chapter of the Sierra Club and the Spokane Home Builders Association, a staunchly conservative group that represents developers and contractors.

He supports gun-control measures like preventing people who are on the terrorist watch list or those with domestic-violence convictions from buying guns, but he supports gun access for hunters and self-defense. He backs a \$15 an hour federal minimum wage, but he says wage increases won’t address income inequality without economic growth. He supports single-payer health care and broad immigration reform that includes a path to citizenship.

To get an idea of how Stuckart could bridge the gap between rural Democrats and Republicans, consider his take on agricultural issues. Climate change, he says, could threaten the quality of Washington’s wheat, making it a less valuable export. Nearly 70 percent of people in the district believe global warming is happening, though only half believe it’s caused mostly by human activities, according to recent data from the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication.

In the 5th District, where half of voters supported Trump and 60 percent backed McMorris Rodgers, 46 percent also backed Democratic senator Patty Murray in November. In all that, Stuckart sees a path to victory.

“There is a way to get somebody to vote for a D even though they’re an R,” Stuckart says. “We need to stop getting stuck in our heads. Speak from the gut, speak from the heart.”

Stuckart was raised by longtime Democrats: a mother who was a teacher active in her union and a father who took a year off college to lead Vietnam War protests and then spent his life working for a nonprofit. Social-justice Catholicism shaped his political philosophy. As a kid, he watched as his church sheltered nine refugees from El Salvador in its basement.

“No matter what we do,” Stuckart says, recounting a lesson from his father, “we always have to take care of the people at the bottom. It’s not an argument of ‘It’s a nice thing to do; it’s good to take care of your [community] members.’ It’s a moral responsibility.”

After earning two degrees from Gonzaga University, Stuckart worked at a nonprofit where he helped develop a ballot measure for after-school programs. When that effort failed, he decided he wanted to be the one helping to write the city budget. So he ran for Spokane City Council. When he was elected, the council was split 4–3 with progressives in the minority. Today, Stuckart is one of a 6–1 progressive majority.

He’s led efforts to increase backyard farming, give workers in Spokane sick time, and pour city funding into spurring private development. He’s been outspoken about the threat of coal trains and introduced a measure to fine railroad operators carrying coal and crude oil

through the city (an effort he later withdrew over concerns that it couldn’t survive a legal challenge). Winning the support of some of Spokane’s most prominent arts advocates, Stuckart helped triple arts funding in the city.

“I’ve done things in Spokane,” he says, “that people never contemplated or thought were impossible.”

Before Stuckart announced his run for Congress, he flirted with the idea of running for mayor instead. (Spokane’s current mayor, David Condon, came to that office from a stint as McMorris Rodgers’s deputy chief of staff.)

After Trump’s win, national media reported that McMorris Rodgers could land a Trump cabinet appointment, leaving her seat open, and Stuckart announced he’d vie for her seat. McMorris Rodgers didn’t get a Trump appointment, but Stuckart stayed in.

Now, as he looks ahead to a year and a half of campaigning, it’s clear beating the incumbent won’t be easy. The 5th Congressional District has steadily backed McMorris Rodgers, a former state legislator, handing her more than 59 percent of the vote nearly

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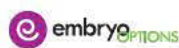
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every time she's been up for reelection. The closest a Democratic challenger came to beating her was in 2006, when she was up against Peter Goldmark and won reelection with 56.4 percent of the vote. Stuckart blames that on the backgrounds of the candidates who've run, most of whom focused on their business experience but hadn't held elected office, leaving them no "track record" to point to.

The 5th District isn't included on the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee's 2018 list of target districts—Republican-held seats they think are vulnerable. And Stuckart's campaign is still rough around the edges. He's raised just \$82,300, compared to the \$2.7 million McMorris Rodgers raised for her last election.

Stuckart has some time to catch up, though. This year, his campaign will focus on increasing his name recognition and talking about issues. To manage the campaign, Stuckart has hired Alex Scott, a relentlessly positive twentysomething who has an encyclopedic knowledge of Eastern Washington and served on his hometown's city council when he was a college student. If a group somewhere in the sprawling district wants to host an event for Stuckart, Scott is determined to get his candidate there.

In 2018, they'll knock on doors. Over lunch at a sandwich shop in Walla Walla, Stuckart diagrams on a brown napkin for me just how much they're going to door-knock: If 10 campaign volunteers go out every day of the month for eight months, and hit 50 doors every time they go out, the campaign can hit 120,000 doors by the 2018 primary. (Maybe a little overoptimistic, Stuckart initially does the math wrong, believing this plan can get him to 125,000 doors.)

The median income in the district is \$47,000, and 16.5 percent of people make an income below the poverty level. Around 73,000 people in the district benefited from Medicaid expansion as part of the Affordable Care Act, according to state data, an expansion that would have been reversed by a Republican health-care bill McMorris Rodgers supported. Stuckart thinks he can sell his message here.

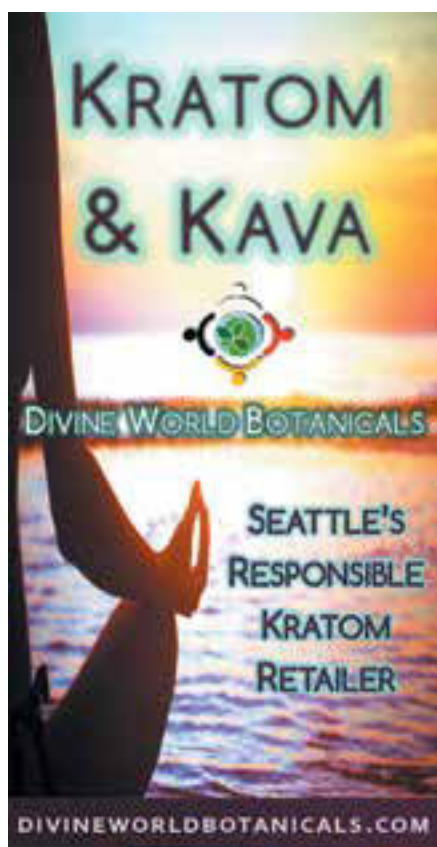
With fundraising and more name recognition, Stuckart hopes to eventually catch the attention of the DCCC. He wants to use small events like the one in Pomeroy to win over communities some Democrats may write off as unwinnable. And he needs help from progressives all over the state to do it.

"If we're going to change, we're all going to have to help each other," he says. "Just electing Democrats out of Seattle is no longer going to get us there."

Back at the vacant storefront the Democrats of Garfield County use to hold meetings, Stuckart never looks at the prepared remarks he brought with him except to flip the pages over so he can take notes on the back as the group talks about the intricacies of dam engineering.

He delivers an improvised 10-minute stump speech and spends an hour and a half taking the group's questions. He takes off his jacket, rolls up his sleeves, and clicks his pen as he talks.

"Trump is doing us all sorts of favors," Stuckart tells the group. "I think there is an enormous opportunity for Democrats to actually take back this seat. I call people and ask for money over the last three months, and they don't say, 'Well, no, this is an impossible task'. They say, 'This is the time, in 2018.'" ■



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WEED

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The Weed Queen of Spokane

A City Council Member Puts Down Roots in the Marijuana Biz

BY AMBER CORTES

At city council meetings, they call her “Spokanabis Stratton” or “The Weed Queen,” and, with a wink, ask her if she brought the brownies. But all teasing aside, 52-year old Spokane City Council member Karen Stratton says she hasn’t gotten a lot of flak, in the political arena or from her constituents, about her decision to grow marijuana.

“I think people were kind of fascinated by it, and interested, because it was so new,” she explains on the drive out to the cannabis farm she co-runs with her husband, attorney Chris Wright.

When a client of Wright’s suggested the idea of starting a farm, the couple began doing research. Their curiosity turned into a full-fledged investment. Of course, a marijuana farm isn’t like a boat or a vacation house. They realized that their decision to grow weed was risky, in light of it still being federally illegal. But they had a son starting college, and Stratton had taken a cut in salary to accept the city council position.

“So we really had to kind of scratch around to see what we could come up with to, um, throw in the pot, so to speak.”

Neither Stratton nor her husband smoke, but both have tried vaping, and she occasionally uses a tincture for sleeping. Stratton’s brother was a Vietnam veteran who was diagnosed with MS and an alcoholic. “I always wish that we could go back and try to get him on some kind of a medical marijuana regimen that might have given him some quality of life, because he didn’t have one,” she says.

At her job, Stratton steers clear of any marijuana-related legislation due to possible conflicts of interest. She did have an opponent once post an article on Facebook about marijuana being a gateway drug, mentioning her name and the fact that she grew—which made her mad.

“I think people assume that we’re big, big pot smokers, which we’re not. I get really testy when people assume they know what our motives were in doing this. Plus, it’s legal, after all.”

Still, with her Catholic upbringing, the feeling of doing something “wrong” hit her like bong full of bricks the first season when they went to pick up the plants.

“I’ll never forget when they opened the door of the warehouse. I’d never seen a marijuana plant! And there were 320-some of them. And the guy who owns the farm still says, ‘Karen, I still remember that look on your face.’”

The road we’re on stretches past the lone barns and the rolling hills of the pastoral region that rings the city of Spokane (where only 52 percent voted yes on I-502, and even fewer outside of Spokane proper). In the summer, Wright tells me, these fields are awash with the lush green of just-sprouting wheat and barley. Now there’s another kind of green growing in them thar hills.

For Stratton and her husband, growing marijuana is a family affair. Her sister helps manage the farm, and during that first stressful harvest—processing four strains: Cinex, Blackberry, Pitbull, and Presidential Kush—they paid other family members to help. Even family members that “probably weren’t quite comfortable with the whole marijuana legal issue,” Stratton says, including her 90-year-old mother, who once served in both the Washington State House and Senate. “She showed up with her coffee, her Diet Coke, and she trimmed,” Stratton says proudly.

The learning curve for running a pot farm is steep, and the couple had their share of early rookie mistakes—like overwatering their crop, for example. A big part of the process is dealing with other people’s negative perceptions, and it helps to be part of a community of legal growers, processors, and retailers. “To me, that’s been the best benefit of this, that you’re able to see people for what they really are, instead of stereotyping,” she says.

“I mean, these are professional people who are part of this whole industry that’s just beginning,” she adds. “They’re kind of like pioneers.” Not unlike a Spokane City Council member who decided to grow weed on the side. ■

For Stratton and her husband, growing marijuana is a family affair.

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THE HEART OF WHITENESS

I WENT TO SPOKANE TO MEET RACHEL DOLEZAL,
THE WHITE WOMAN WHO SAYS SHE'S BLACK

BY IJEOMA OLUO

PHOTOS BY RAJAH BOSE

I'm sitting across from Rachel Dolezal, and she looks... white. Not a little white, not racially ambiguous. Dolezal looks really, really white. She looks like a white woman with a mild suntan, in box braids—like perhaps she'd just gotten back from a Caribbean vacation and decided to keep the hairstyle for a few days “for fun.”

She is also smaller than I expected, tiny even—even in her wedge heels and jeans. I'm six feet tall and fat. I wonder for a moment what this conversation might look like to bystanders if things were to get heated—a giant black woman interrogating a tiny white woman. Everything about Dolezal is smaller than expected—the tiny house she rents, the limited and very used furniture. Her 1-year-old son toddles in front of cartoons playing on a small television. The only thing of real size in the house seems to be a painting of her adopted brother, and now adopted son, Izaiah, from when he was a young child. The painting looms over Dolezal on the living-room wall as she begins to talk. I try to get my bearings and listen to what she's trying to say, but for the first few moments, my mind keeps repeating: “How in the hell did I get here?”

I did not want to think about, talk about, or write about Rachel Dolezal ever again. While many people have been highly entertained by the story of a woman who passed herself off for almost a decade as a black woman, even rising to the head of the Spokane chapter of the NAACP, before being “outed” during a TV interview by KXLY reporter Jeff Humphrey as white, as later confirmed by her white parents, I found little amusement in her continued spotlight. When the story first broke in June 2015, I was approached by more editors in a week than I had heard from in two months. They were all looking for “fresh takes” on the Dolezal scandal from the very people whose identity had now been put up for debate—black women. I wrote two pieces on Dolezal for two different websites, mostly focused not on her, but on the lack of understanding of black women's identity that was causing the conversation about Dolezal to become more and more painful for so many black women.

After a few weeks of media obsession, I—and most of the other black women I knew—was completely done with Rachel Dolezal.

Or, at least I hoped to be.

Right after turning in a draft of my book on race at the end of February, I went to a theater to do an onstage interview on race and intersectionality (a mode of thinking that intersects identities and systems of social oppression and domination). But before going onstage, my phone buzzed with a “news” alert. Rachel Dolezal had changed her name. I quickly glanced at the article and saw that Dolezal had changed her name to Nkechi Amare Diallo. My jaw dropped in disbelief. Nkechi is my sister's name—my visibly black sister born and raised in Nigeria. Dolezal claimed that the name change was to make it easier for her to get a job, because the scandal had made it so that nobody in the Eastern Washington town of Spokane (pop. 210,000) would look at an application with the name Rachel Dolezal on it.

I'm going to pause here so we can recognize the absurdity of this claim: You change your name from Rachel Dolezal to Nkechi Amare Diallo because everyone in your lily-white town (Spokane is more than 80 percent white) now knows you as the Rachel Dolezal who was pretending to be black, so you change your name to NKECHI AMARE DIALLO

because somehow they won't know who you are then. Maybe they'll just confuse you with all the other Nkechi Amare Diallos in Spokane and not think when a white woman shows up for the interview: "Oh yeah, it's that white woman who pretended to be black and then changed her name to NKECHI AMARE DIALLO." Also, even if there were 50 Nkechi Amare Diallos in Spokane—trust me, as someone named Ijeoma Oluo who grew up in the white Seattle suburb of Lynnwood—you'd have a much better chance of getting a job interview if you changed your name to Sarah.

By the time I finished my interview on that rainy February day, my cell phone indicated that I had a voice mail. It was *The Stranger*, asking if I would spend the day with Rachel Dolezal.

For two years, I, like many other black women who talk or write about racial justice, have tried to avoid Rachel Dolezal—but she follows us wherever we go. So if I couldn't get away from her, I was going to at least try to figure out why. I surprised myself by agreeing to the interview.

I began to get nervous as the interview day approached. By the time I boarded a plane to Spokane, which is a one-hour flight from Seattle and is near the border with Idaho, a state that's almost 90 percent white, I was half sure that this interview was my worst career decision to date. Initially, I had hoped that my research on Dolezal would reassure me that there was a way to find real value in this conversation, that there would be a way to actually turn this circus into a productive discussion on race in America.

But then I read her book.

Shortly after I announced the deal for my first book (a primer on how to have more productive conversations on race), a friend posted a link on my Facebook page. With a joking comment along the lines of "Oh no! Looks like Rachel beat you to it!" she linked to an article announcing that Rachel Dolezal would also be publishing her first book on race, *In Full Color: Finding My Place in a Black and White World*. Throughout the week, at least five other friends sent me similar links with similar comments. A look through my social-media feeds showed that I was not alone. Black women writers around the country were all being sent links to articles on Dolezal's book deal—the memoir of a black woman whose claim to fame is... not being actually black.



"Do you mind if I fold laundry while we talk? Then we'll go down to the art studio later and look at some of my work," Dolezal says to me after I arrive at her home.

The laundry basket is already sitting in front of the fireplace ledge. Dolezal takes a seat and begins folding while I dig my notebook out of my backpack and set up my recorder. The scene is eerily normal. The woman who has been at the center of a controversy that has captivated the country for two years is doing chores and lovingly soothing her toddler after he falls down while trying to pick up a toy. Dolezal asks almost defensively if I have read her book, and when I say yes, she looks visibly relieved.

With the din of the television set playing in the background, and with occasional interruptions from her busy toddler, Dolezal and I begin talking.

She has just returned from New York City where she had done the rounds during a media tour for her book, appearing in a Facebook Live interview for the *New York Times* and giving interviews to *Vice* and the *Today* show.

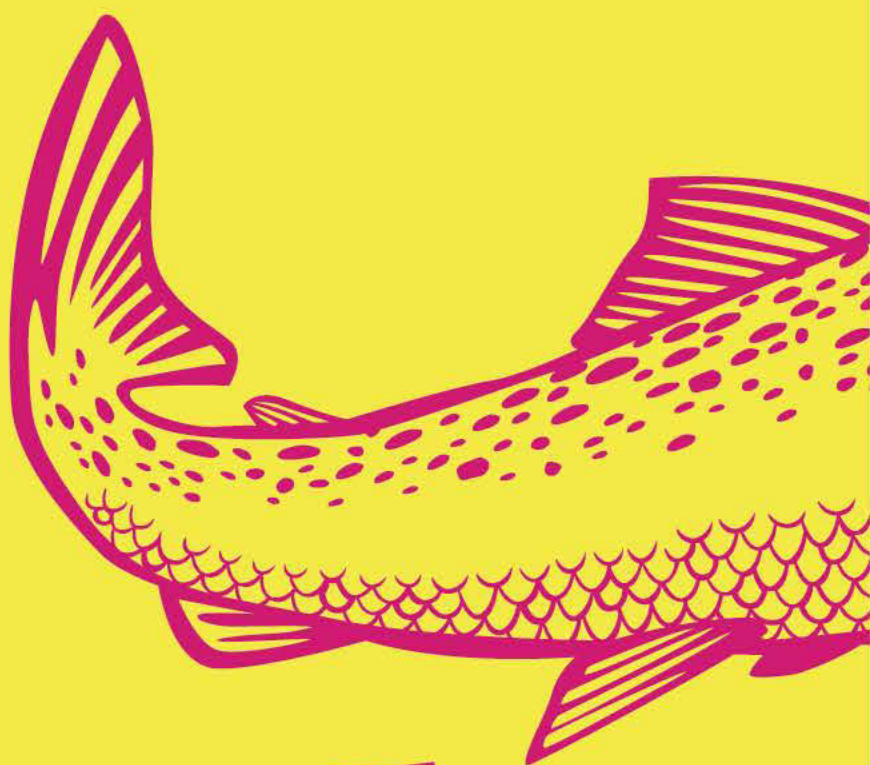
She is currently jobless and spends her days looking after her sons, ferrying them to school and appointments. She braids hair for ►



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INTERVIEW Ijeoma Oluo (left) with Rachel Dolezal and her son in their kitchen.

◀ cash and is still looking for work. Her rental house is a month-to-month lease. “Hopefully, after the book release and this round of media, maybe everybody’s questions and curiosities will be satisfied and then I can reintegrate into society,” she says with a smile.

We visit Dolezal’s studio. She is, in all honesty, a very talented painter. The majority of her paintings feature black people. Other than the paintings of her children, most of the black people depicted appear to be dressed as slaves or tribespeople. Breaking this pattern was a series of portraits hanging on the wall of Dolezal herself. They were done Warhol style, each painting duplicated in a different color. Dolezal explains them to me: “You know, people are always saying to me, ‘Rachel, I don’t care if you are red, green, blue, or purple,’ so I decided to paint myself as red, green, blue, or purple.”

Dolezal chuckles as she says this, as if it is the most clever and original idea anybody has ever had. I don’t know how many times a white person has told me that they don’t care if I’m “red, green, blue, or purple” when they are trying to explain to me just how “not racist” they are—I’ve lost count. I do know that I’ve rolled my eyes every time. As my brother Ahamefule said to me once, “They may not care if I’m red or green or blue or purple—but they sure as hell care that I’m black.”

I ask her specifically about the problematic sections of the book, explaining that her description of falling in love with blackness based on a *National Geographic* and a *Sports Illustrated* seems fetishizing to me.

“As a black person, as a kid,” I say, “I remember *National Geographic* being something that was used to mock me regularly. A lot of the images of black people in *National Geographic* have been incredibly fetishizing over the years. Is there a reason why you chose the language that you chose? Because honestly, if anybody came up to me and said their first encounter with blackness was through *National Geographic*, and they loved it, I would end the conversation immediately.”

Dolezal seems offended I would even ask that, reminding me that she was writing about her experience with blackness as a child. “Well, my older brother was fetishizing black women in *National Geographic*,” she says, looking at me curiously as she folds clothes. “And I talk about that [in the book]. I felt like my gaze was more humanizing, and more of, again, black is beautiful, black is inspirational. I had a different gaze than he did.”

“I understand *National Geographic* has been exploitative. I understand that. But as a 5- or 8-year-old child, looking at images of people, you’re not looking with a doctoral degree of sociology and anthropology and parceling this stuff apart. You’re just... you’re looking at representations of the human experience.”

I try to clarify that it is the fact that she thinks that her connection to blackness represented via *National Geographic*, no matter how inspirational, could be authentic is itself the problem: “But you are looking at representations crafted by white supremacy. I mean, it’s not actually black people you are looking at.”

“Just like when people are watching TV,” Dolezal says in her defense. Then she seems to remember the interviews in which she had bragged that growing up without television saved her from viewing blackness through a white lens, and her tone changes and sounds almost bitter.

“In that sense, maybe I wasn’t entirely sheltered from the whole propaganda,” she sighs. “Or whatever.”

There was a moment before meeting Dolezal and reading her book that I thought that she genuinely loves black people but took it a little too far. But now I can see this is not the case. This is not a love gone mad. Something else, something even sinister is at work in her relationship and understanding of blackness.

There is a chapter where she compares herself to black slaves. Dolezal describes selling crafts to buy new clothes, and she compares her quest to craft her way into new clothes with chattel slavery. When I ask what she has to say to people who might be offended by her comparing herself to slaves, Dolezal is indignant almost to exasperation.

She is done folding clothes.

“I’m not comparing the struggles, okay? Because I never said that my life was the same. I never said that it was the equivalent of slavery, of chattel slavery. I did work and bought all my own clothes and shoes since I was 9 years old. That’s not a typical American childhood life,” she says. “I worked very hard, but I didn’t resonate with white women who were born with a silver spoon. I didn’t find a sentence of connection in those stories, or connection with the story of the princess who was looking for a knight in shining armor.”

She almost spits out the last sentences.

I am beginning to wonder if it is blackness that Dolezal doesn’t understand, but whiteness. Because growing up poor, on a family farm in Idaho, being homeschooled by fundamentalist Christian parents sounds whiter than this “silver spoon” whiteness she claims to be rejecting.

Dolezal feels she is different from others who would genuinely compare their hardships to slavery: “But those people are not aware, they haven’t been black history professors,” she says with a voice trembling with indignation.

I want to remind Dolezal that she is a former black history professor who has degrees in art, not black history, African history, or American history, but I don’t. I’m trying to not get kicked out of her place early.

It’s only been an hour, and I still need to ►

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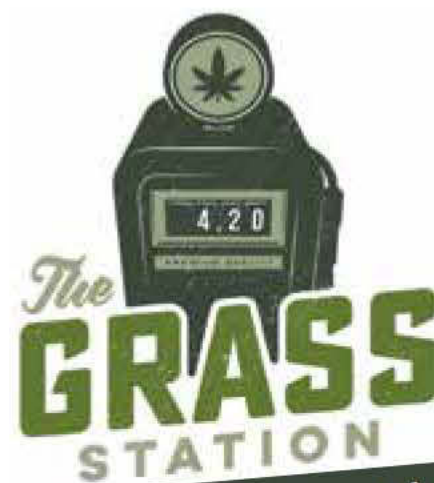
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ask The Question.

Dolezal has argued many times that her insistence on black identity will not only allow her to live in the culture that she says matches her true self, but will also help free visibly black people from racial oppression by helping to destroy the social construct of race.

I am more than a little skeptical that Dolezal's identity as the revolutionary strike against the myth of race is anything more than impractical white saviorism—at least when it comes to the ways in which race oppresses black people. Even if there were thousands of Rachel Dolezals in the country, would their claims of blackness do anything to open up the definition of whiteness to those with darker skin, coarser hair, or racialized features? The degree to which you are excluded from white privilege is largely dependent on the degree to which your appearance deviates from whiteness. You can be extremely light-skinned and still be black, but you cannot be extremely or even moderately dark-skinned and be treated as white—ever.

By turning herself into a very, very, very, very light-skinned black woman, Dolezal opens herself up to be treated as black by white society only to the extent that they can visually identify her as such, and no amount of visual change would provide Dolezal with the inherited trauma and socioeconomic disadvantage of racial oppression in this country.

I ask her some easy questions, but she answers them with increasing irritation. When we have been together for three hours, I feel it's time to ask The Question.

It's the same question that other black interviewers have asked her. A question she seems to deeply dislike—so much so that she complains about the question in her book. But even in the book, it's not a question she actually answers: How is her racial fluidity anything more than a function of her privilege as a white person?

If Dolezal's identity only helps other people born white become black while still shielding them from the majority of the oppression of visible blackness, and does nothing to help those born black become white—how is this not just more white privilege?

Dolezal takes issue with the idea that racial fluidity only travels one way: “Well, I would respectfully disagree that it only goes one way,” she says. “I meet people all the time who went the other way. I meet people who have passed or identified as Latina their entire life who were born categorized as black. Who pass white and have a black parent because that's how they look or that's how they have kind of come to look.”

Stories of people of color “passing” for white have been well known since the time of slavery. Almost any person of color in the United States has a relative in the past or present who has “passed” for white. But “passing” was a ticket out of the worst injustices of racial oppression that has been open to only a select few. The history of “passing” in the United States is a story filled with pain and separation. It has never been a story of liberation in the way in which Dolezal is trying to describe it.

I point out that there is a difference between Dolezal's claim of racial liberation and the forced denial of race in order to escape oppression.

“I'm only bringing that up because you said it can only go one way and yet it has and still does go the other way,” Dolezal snaps, as if this defense was pulled out of her and its limitations are my fault. But not only have I heard her invoke the historical passing of light-skinned people of color in previous interviews when any question about the one-way

street of her racial fluidity was brought up, she even included this argument in her book. She has had plenty of time to come up with a better answer to that question.

I try one more time to get an answer to this question, but from a different angle: “Where does the function of privilege of still appearing to the world as a white person play into this and into your identity as affiliating with black culture?”

Dolezal seems to struggle for a moment before answering: “I don't know. I guess I do have light skin, but I don't know that I necessarily appear to the world as a white person. I think that since the white parents did their TV tour on every national network, some people will forever see me as my birth category, as a white woman. But people who see me as that don't see me really for who I am and probably are not seeing me as a white woman in some kind of a privileged sense. If that makes sense.”

It doesn't.

I am nothing if not stubborn, so I clarify my question: “I mean, if you were walking down a street in New York, just as an anonymous person, to a lot of people you would appear as a white woman. There's a function of privilege to that, right? The way in which you would be able to walk through the street, how people would interact with you, the level of services you would receive, your ability to get a cab, all of that would be impacted. Does that privilege factor into your identity?”

Dolezal looks at me as if my question is completely ludicrous: “Well, I understand your question, but once again, that's not what I experience. I don't experience people treating me as a white woman in New York or elsewhere, an anonymous white woman. That's what I'm trying to explain. People either treat me like a freak because I'm the white woman that pretended to be black in their eyes or treat me as a light-skinned black woman. That's how people see me.”

I'm confused as to whether Dolezal is claiming that she's never seen as white because she is simply recognized as Rachel Dolezal wherever she goes, or if she doesn't “look” white to strangers because her physical appearance is not that of a white woman.

I'm slightly shocked that this is an argument she would make in person. Maybe in a dusty Eastern Washington town like Spokane, where only 2 percent of the people are black, something as “exotic” as box braids might be enough to convince the locals that you are not white, but I cannot imagine this working elsewhere. I'm looking right at her. I know what white people look like. I decide to say so.

“Really? Like if you don't say, ‘I'm black...’ because I've read a lot of interviews with other people who said when they first encountered you, people who've worked with you, that they automatically assumed you were white until you had asserted otherwise, vocally. I personally... like if I were to run across you in the street, I would assume that you were white.”

Dolezal sighs and looks at me as if I am truly all that is wrong with America. “Well, I guess it's like in the eye of the beholder.”

It is obvious by then that Dolezal does not like me, but I don't appear to be alone in that feeling. Throughout our conversation, I get the increasing impression that, for someone who claims to love blackness, Rachel Dolezal has little more than contempt for many black people and their own black identities.

The dismissive and condescending attitude toward any black people who see blackness differently than she does is woven throughout her comments in our conversation. It is not just our pettiness, it is also our lack of ►

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DOLEZAL'S BOOK *Is there a copy of Black Like Me on the shelf?*

◀ education that is preventing us from getting on Dolezal's level of racial understanding. She informs me multiple times that black people have rejected her because they simply haven't learned yet that race is a social construct created by white supremacists, they simply don't know any better and don't want to: "I've done my research, I think a lot of people, though, haven't probably read those books and maybe never will."

I point out that I am a black woman with a political-science degree who writes about race and culture for a living, who has indeed read "those books." I find her blanket justification of "race is a social construct" overly simplistic. "Race is just a social construct" is a retort I get quite often from white people who don't want to talk about black issues anymore. A lot of things in our society are social constructs—money, for example—but the impact they have on our lives, and the rules by which they operate, are very real. I cannot undo the evils of capitalism simply by pretending to be a millionaire.

It's clear I have pushed her to the edge of frenzy, so I decide to discuss something about the book that will not push her over that edge. I talk to her about the foreword by her adopted dad, Albert Wilkerson Jr. It's sympathetic. "You have a community that has stuck by you through this," I say. At that point, she breaks down and starts crying.

□□□

For a white woman who had grown up with only a few magazines of stylized images of blackness to imagine herself into a real-life black identity without any lived black experience, to turn herself into a black history professor without a history degree, to place herself at the forefront of local black society that she had adopted less than a decade earlier, all while seeming to claim to do it better and more authentically than any black person who would dare challenge her—well, it's the ultimate "you can be anything" success story of white America. Another branch of manifest destiny. No wonder America couldn't get enough of the Dolezal story.

Perhaps it really was that simple. I couldn't escape Rachel Dolezal because I can't escape white supremacy. And it is white supremacy that told an unhappy and outcast white woman that black identity was hers for the taking. It is white supremacy that told her that any black people who questioned her were obviously uneducated and unmotivated

to rise to her level of wokeness. It is white supremacy that then elevated this display of privilege into the dominating conversation on black female identity in America. It is white supremacy that decided that it was worth a book deal, national news coverage, and yes—even this interview.

And with that, the anger that I had toward her began to melt away. Dolezal is simply a white woman who cannot help but center herself in all that she does—including her fight

for racial justice. And if racial justice doesn't center her, she will redefine race itself in order to make that happen. It is a bit extreme, but it is in no way new for white people to take what they want from other cultures in the name of love and respect, while distorting or discarding the remainder of that culture for their comfort. What else is *National Geographic* but a long history of this practice. Maybe now that I've seen the unoriginality

of it all, even with my sister's name that she has claimed as her own, she will haunt me no more and simply blend into the rest of white supremacy that I battle every day.

□□□

Before I left Dolezal, I remembered that my editors had told me to make sure the photographer got a few pictures of us together. We were both sitting at the kitchen table, which provided an ideal photo opportunity.

The natural light from the sliding door by the kitchen was great for photography, but with our current seating arrangement, that light was falling on me and leaving her in the shadow. It is standard practice to have the interviewee sit in the best light, so I asked her to switch seats. The photographer thanked me for the suggestion, and I stood to allow Dolezal to take the chair I had been in.

Dolezal looked at me with a smirk and said accusingly: "Then you'll look darker and I'll look lighter, because the light's on me. I get it."

I realized that like all other black people who had challenged Dolezal, I had been written off as a bitter, petty black woman. She was concerned that the wrong lighting would make her look white.

She could not see that there was no amount of lighting that would make her look whiter than that interaction had. Perhaps that itself was the secret to the power of the Dolezal phenomenon—the overwhelming whiteness of it all. ■



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SAVAGE LOVE

Dick Monsters BY DAN SAVAGE

I'm a queer girl living with a male partner. This weekend, we found ourselves in an after-hours club, made some new friends, and ended up at a house with two other guys and a girl. Things were pretty playful with everyone except for one of the guys. We all wanted him gone, but he wouldn't take the hint. He bought the booze for the after-party, so we were a little unsure of the etiquette of asking him to leave. Neither I nor the other girl was interested. I made it clear that penetration was off the menu for me, and everyone respected this—except the one guy. He asked if I would do anal, and I refused. He shoved his fingers in my ass, and I stopped him. I positioned myself away from him, but he somehow got behind me again and put his bare dick in my ass—though barely. The host pulled him off me. We were admittedly all a bit fucked up from partying. I had a stern talk with him about respecting consent—but when I felt his dick enter me from behind a second time, I got upset. My boyfriend threatened him, and the guy punched my boyfriend and broke my sweetheart's nose. The host threw the guy out with no pants, so he had a well-deserved walk of shame. We don't know the guy's last name, so we can't charge him. My question is this: As a couple, we enjoy threesomes/moresomes/swingers clubs, etc., and this wasn't the first time a fun night was ruined by a persistent dick monster. Do you have any suggestions for dealing with pricks like these? Sober and not horny me has all the answers, but when I'm feeling violated and vulnerable, and distracted by whatever dick/pussy is in my face, I'm not the loudmouthed feminist bitch I usually am. We all agree he should have been kicked out before the offenses added up. Maybe he should have been kicked out when we all agreed we weren't comfortable with him playing with us. What's the etiquette of telling someone they can't join in? I'm done dancing around assholes' feelings.

Queer Unicorn Exhausted
Entertaining Numbskulls

"Persistent dick monster" (PDM) is putting it mildly, QUEEN. This guy sexually assaulted you and physically assaulted your boyfriend—that guy is a VSP (violent sexual predator), not a PDM. And even if you don't know his last name, report the night's events to the police. It's possible this asshole is already known to the cops—hell, it's possible he assaulted someone else on his pantsless way home and they're already holding him and they'd be happy to add more charges to the ones this asshole is already facing.

I'm not saying you have to report him, of course. It's estimated that only 15 to 35 percent of all sexual assaults are reported to the police, and only 9 percent of all accused rapists are prosecuted. While recognizing some folks have legitimate reasons for not going to the cops, we need to get those numbers up—because unreported rapes and sexual assaults can't be prosecuted.

As for preventing a PDM/VSP from ruining your future threesomes/moresomes, etc., advance planning—and familiarity among participants—is the best way to ensure a good experience. Spontaneous can be fun, but it's difficult to pull off safely with groups—spontaneous fun can be difficult to pull off safely in pairs. Another lesson to be learned from this encounter: Getting shitfaced/shtoned/shwasted may not be the best plan. It's often the worst plan—getting fucked up rarely results in good sex, even between people who fuck on the regular. Plus, it's easier to ignore red flags/gut feelings when you can barely shew straight. Having to remind someone about consent is a major red flag, QUEEN, and one we're likelier to overlook when we're shwasted. In a situation where you're receiving unwanted touches, your polite dismissal of them should be enough. If this reminder has to be repeated twice, that participant should have their pass to moresome mountain revoked immediately.

Two final takeaways: Even kind and decent people can be terrible about taking hints—especially when doing so means getting cut out of a drunken fuckfest. So don't hint, tell. There's no rule of etiquette that can paper over the discomfort and awkwardness of that moment, so your group's designated speaker-upper will just have to power through it. And if you're going to drink and group in the future, QUEEN, hew to a strict BYOB policy. You don't ever want to be in a position where you hesitate to show someone the door because they bought the booze.



JOE NEWTON

My wife and I are newlyweds. My wife wants sex two to three times a week, which matches up perfectly with my desires. But her desire for sex peaks around 9 to 5 a.m. She's a morning person with insomnia, and I'm a night owl and a heavy sleeper. She's tried to wake me up for sex, and my unconscious self has rejected her multiple times (I never remember this). When I do wake up, the half-conscious romps we have aren't really satisfying. My sexual desire peaks midday and after work when I have more energy to have sex or come up with a fun bondage scene. But when she gets home, she usually has a series of chores or projects that take up all her attention.

Insomnia Now Suspected Of Making
Nights Incredibly Awkward

Your wife needs to save chores and projects for 3 to 5 a.m.—provided no power tools are involved—and reserve the early evening hours for romps and creative bondage scenes.

My husband and I have been together for six years and are quite happy, much to the chagrin of his family. They are Islamophobic, antichoice, Fox News-watching, conservative Catholics. They began writing us letters about how they disapproved of us when we moved in together before marriage. One launched a campaign to break us up because they figured my then-boyfriend didn't know I was bisexual. (He did, and I'm out very publicly.) They boycotted our wedding because it was not in a Catholic church. They would not come to a party we had because a Muslim friend would be there. They've realized that in order for us to even rarely see them, they need to cool it, but they don't think they have anything to apologize for. After Trump's election (#ITMFA), I've found it difficult to stomach them even in small doses. I grew up Catholic myself and was sent through gay conversion therapy, so I have a visceral reaction to this kind of bigotry, especially when it is directed toward my family of choice. My husband is also appalled by them and always puts us first, but the idea of not retaining a connection to his family of origin hurts him. Do I suffer the occasional visit? Help!

Shouldn't Hubby Unload These
Outrageously Unenlightened Turds

For the sake of your marriage, SHUTOUT, you should suffer the occasional visit—whether your husband sees his family on his own or you're along for the ride—without punishing your husband for it. Remember: You're in this together, and private jokes, surreptitious eye-rolls, and pot lozenges can go a long way toward making these events not just bearable but (mischievously) pleasurable. And seeing as you've already trained his family to cool it by cutting back on your time with them—a strategy I recommend—you can train them to keep things civil, hate-free, and non-biphobic by warning them in advance that you will get up and leave if they say anything shitty or unkind to you, about you, or in front of you. Then follow through. ■

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All the Events *The Stranger* Suggests This Week

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MARK KAUFMAN

READINGS & TALKS

MoPOP Pop Conference 2017

DON'T MISS Generally, if you care about something, maybe it's good to talk about it. And with something so creatively magnanimous as music, maybe it's good to talk about it all the time, so that every facet can be fully represented. The MoPOP Pop Con is a solid example of intellectualizing art without squashing the abilities of everyman creation. Analysis of art does not diminish its power, and, as it stands, art remains one of the few things that gains ground as we discuss it. The theme of this year's Pop Con is "Sign O' the Times: Music and Politics," so naturally all conference components will focus on the dovetailing of music and politics in creative, personal, and public realms. Panels throughout the conference—some of which will be led by Ann Powers, Damon Krukowski, and Franz Nicolay, as well as a slew of other pop-culture experts and prolific music critics—attend to art-activated variables, like environmental impact or historical legacy, with discussions touching on everything from identity politics to protest music in the modern era. (*Museum of Pop Culture, April 20-23, \$20/\$25*) **KIM SELLING**

We also recommend...

David Callahan with Paul Shoemaker: The

Givers: Town Hall, Thurs April 20, 7:30 pm, \$5
Designing the Amazon Spheres: Gardens Under Glass: Pacific Science Center, Tues April 25, 7-10 pm, \$5
Elisa Chavez Scratch Night: Nerds & Nazis: Town Hall, Sat April 22, 7:30 pm, \$5
Elisabeth Rosenthal: Town Hall, Mon April 24, 7:30 pm, \$5
An Evening of Poetry with Linda Bierds and Tod Marshall: Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Thurs April 20, 7 pm, \$10
Fail Again. Fail Better: A Conversation on Artistic Failure: Northwest Film Forum, Wed April 19, 6 pm, free
Goodship Higher Education: I Am Fake News: Melrose Market Studios, Wed April 19, 7-10 pm, \$20, sold out
Helen Oyeyemi: Benaroya Hall, Tues April 25, 7:30 pm, \$20-\$80
Intrepid Explorers in an Impossible World: The Amazing Drawings of Ethan Murrow: Town Hall, Wed April 19, 7:30 pm, \$5
Jason Whitmarsh: The Histories: Open Books, Fri April 21, 7-9 pm, free
John Scalzi: The Collapsing Empire: University Temple United Methodist Church, Wed April 19, 7 pm, \$30
Lena Khalaf Tuffaha: Water & Salt: Elliott Bay Book Company, Sat April 22, 7 pm, free
Lesley Stahl with Tony Ventrella: Town Hall, Tues April 25, 7:30 pm, \$5
Lidia Yuknavitch: The Book of Joan: Elliott Bay Book Company, Wed April 19, 7 pm, free
Loud Mouth Lit: St. Andrews Bar and Grill, Tues April 25, 8 pm, free
Marcus Harrison Green Scratch Night:

Caucasians Anonymous: Town Hall, Sun April 23, 7:30 pm, \$5
NOTIS: Spring Translation Slam: Folio: The Seattle Athenaeum, Thurs April 20, 5:30-7:30 pm, \$5
Poetry on Buses Launch Party: Moore Theatre, Mon April 24, 7:30 pm-midnight, free
Pop-Up Book Sale: Folio: The Seattle Athenaeum, Fri April 21, 3-7 pm, Sat April 22, 10 am-5 pm, Sun April 23, 12-4 pm, free
Rain City Slam 2017 Grand Slam with Paul Tran: Hale's Palladium, Wed April 19, 7 pm, \$10
Roger Fernandes, Lower Elwha Band of the S'Klallam Indians Storyteller: Renton History Museum, Sat April 22, 11 am-noon, \$5
Seattle StorySLAM: Duped: St. Mark's, Fri April 21, 8 pm, \$10
Stephan Pastis: Suit Your Selfie: Elliott Bay Book Company, Mon April 24, 7 pm, free
WordsWest 25: Terrance Hayes and Jane Wong: C&P Coffee Company, Wed April 19, 7-9 pm, free
WWE Hall Of Famer Jake The Snake Roberts: Tractor Tavern, Mon April 24, 8 pm, \$25/\$55

Complete listings at strangerthingstodo.com

PERFORMANCE

Wellesley Girl

DON'T MISS After a massive environmental catastrophe, the United States has been reduced to fewer than 435 people living within a walled city that used to be the wealthy

suburbs of Boston. When outsiders suddenly appear and set up camp outside the citadel walls, the miniature United States must decide whether to send a diplomat to welcome them, preemptively bomb them, or just hunker down and hope for the best. A few moments in playwright Brendan Pelsue's otherwise excellent script invite overly melodramatic readings. Overall, however, the scenes are tight, the dialogue is smart, and the story is thrilling. Even when the identity of the barbarians at the gate is revealed, I kept wondering, "WHAT NEXT?!" That doesn't happen very often in Seattle theater. (*18th & Union, Thurs-Mon, 7:30 pm, \$17/\$28, through April 29*) **RICH SMITH**

We also recommend...

Ballet on Broadway: McCaw Hall, April 20-23, \$29-\$187
Brown Derby Series: T2 (Terminator 2, Judgement Day): Re-bar, April 20-22, 8 pm, \$20, 21+
Converge Dance Festival 2017: Erickson Theatre Off Broadway, Fri April 21, 8 pm, Sat April 22, 5:30 and 8 pm, \$18-\$20
Deep Space Lez: Gay City, April 20-22, 7 pm, Sun April 23, 5 pm, \$12-\$20
The Fog Machine Play: The Slate Theater, April 20-22, 7:30 pm, \$15
A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Filibuster: A Cabaret: Rendezvous, Mon April 24, 7-9 pm, \$8, 21+
Here Lies Love: Seattle Repertory Theatre, Wed-Sun & Tues, \$93-\$103, through June 4
The Institute of Memory (TIME): On the

Continued ►

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Ne-Hi will be performing at our SoDo location at 12:30pm. They are appearing in support of their new album "Offers."



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THINGS TO DO RECORD STORE DAY

Find even more details at strangerthingstodo.com.

Source or savior, Record Store Day is coming on Saturday, April 22, and there's nothing you can do to change that. For those of you who aren't music nerds, Record Store Day (or RSD) was conceived in 2007 as a day of celebration for vinyl enthusiasts and the more pragmatic people who love them, in which all facets of record store life are placed on a pedestal for the sake of saving a couple bucks on a Big Star re-release (think High Fidelity with a cheering section comprised of only Jack Blacks). Depending on who you ask, RSD is either an incredible show of support for a part of the music industry previously failing in the mainstream arena, or it's a chance for major labels to force their new school drudge through the pipeline, effectively cutting out much of the vinyl pressing production calendar for smaller, less moneyed labels. Either way, deals!! Since we are a diverse people, capable of feeling multiple feels at once, we have compiled the whole deluge of RSD special releases, in-store performances, vinyl discounts, and store events for you here.

PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS WITH SPECIAL EVENTS ANNOUNCED

Easy Street Records

Shop all day at Easy Street Records, but make sure you're there at 8 p.m. for a concert by Seattle's own Bread & Butter. Their first album is making its debut this week with Killroom Records, so it's the perfect time to hear their kicky 80s-throwback tunes. 4559 California Ave SW, 206-938-3279, easystreetonline.com.

Everyday Music

EM will host DJs and live acts all Record Store Day (9 am-10 pm), including some of the most admired singers and jockeys in Seattle: DJ Dr. Troy (of Medical Records RX), DoNormaal, Zen Mother, Pleasures, Bankie Phones, Raica, Tomten, Mommy Long Legs, and DJ Veins (*Stranger* music writer Dave Segal—he'll definitely have some weird tracks for you). Plus, pick up some special vinyl for your own collection. 1520 10th Ave, 206-568-3321, everydaymusic.com.

Georgetown Records

At 4 p.m., enjoy free Record Store Day concerts by garage rock purists the Paper Dolls and Bonneville Power, who play "music to

sneer and bob your head." 1201 S Vale St, 206-762-5638, georgetownrecords.net.

Hawthorne Stereo

Audio shop Hawthorne Stereo will celebrate Record Store Day with a special sale: 10% off new or used turntables, cartridges, belts, record brushes, and accessories. Get yourself a player for all that priceless vinyl you've snagged. 6303 Roosevelt Way NE, 206-522-9609, hawthornestereo.com.

Jigsaw Records

Record shop and label Jigsaw Records will be selling a unique laser-cut seven-inch vinyl from the Japanese shoegaze/dream-fuzz group Cattle. The record will only be available from Jigsaw, and only on Record Store Day 2017. 608 NW 65th St, 662-450-3127, jigsaw-records.com.

Jive Time Records

Fremont's little but lovely Jive Time will offer 25% off used CDs and vinyl and give you a free hand-screened Record Store Day poster if you spend \$50 or more, and a free shirt if you shell out \$100 or more. 3506 Fremont Ave N, 206-632-5483, jivetimerecords.com.

Light in the Attic

Light in the Attic Records (find them in KEXP) will host two concerts for Record Store Day. Jump out of bed for Evening Bell's moody psych-Americana at 9 a.m., then stay for Mommy Long Legs' gleefully rude, screechy punk at noon. While you're there, spend big (\$100 or more—might equal a lot of vinyl, since there's a 10% sale on non-RSD records) and get a free RSD shirt. 472 First Ave N, 206-359-5284, lightintheattic.net.

Porchlight Coffee & Records

For Record Store Day, in addition to the special releases, Porchlight will offer sales on vinyl and its own pins, T-shirts, and other merch. 1517 14th Ave, 206-329-5461, porchlightcoffee.com.

Silver Platters

For Record Store Day, hear a live performance at 12:30 p.m. by 80s-riffy Chicago indie band Ne-Hi, who will probably play some good tunes from their newest album *Offers*, then stay on to get an autograph from the reunited Zombies at 2 p.m. before they play the Showbox. 2930 1st Ave S, 206-283-3472, silverplatters.com.

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THINGS TO DO RSD

Spin Cycle

Spin Cycle will open at 6 a.m. on Record Store Day and give away gift certificates and Doc Marten boots. 321 Broadway E, 206-971-0267, facebook.com/spincycleseattle.

PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS WITH RSD RELEASES OR GENERAL SALES

Daybreak Records

4308 Fremont Ave N, 206-268-0702, daybreakrecordstore.com

Golden Oldies Records

201 NE 45th St, 206-547-2260, goldenoldiesrecords.net

Holy Cow Records

1501 Pike Place #325, 206-405-4200

Rat City Records

9632 16th Ave SW, 206-432-9537, facebook.com/RatCityRecordsandRelics

Singles Going Steady

2219 Second Ave C, 206-441-7396

Sonic Boom Records

2209 NW Market St, 206-297-2666, sonic-boomrecords.com

Sub Pop Records

Seattle-Tacoma International Airport

Wall of Sound

1205 E Pike St #1C, 206-441-9880, wo-sound.com

Zion's Gate Records

1100 E Pike St, 206-568-5446

OTHER RSD-RELATED EVENTS NOT AT RECORD STORES

Cataldo's Eric Anderson

Eric Anderson of local indie pop group Cataldo will play an intimate solo set this weekend in promotion of Cataldo's upcoming album Keepers being released on Molly Moon's new label Mooncrew Records. Molly Moon's Ice Cream, 917 E Pine St, Sat April 22, 12-12:45 pm, free.

The Do206 Pop-Up Record Shop

Do206 and Tito's Handmade Vodka have teamed up to present a massive pop-up record shop across the expanse of Q Nightclub. Enjoy Tito's drink specials, live music, and plenty of vinyl to go around, with free admission once you RSVP. Q Nightclub, 1426 Broadway, Sun April 23, 12-5 pm, free.

Dogfish Head Record Store Day Celebration

Stressed out from vinyl shopping? TeKu Tavern will have Record Store Day's official brew, Beer To Drink Music To '17 (a relaxing "tropical blonde" ale with kiwi and hibiscus flowers) on draft, as well as other Dogfish Head brews. Enter a raffle to win a Crosley Record Player for all your sweet new finds. Teku Tavern, 522 Denny Way, Sat April 22, 6-10:30 pm.

Record Store Day Tasting and Tap Takeover from Dogfish Head

Dogfish Head's official Record Store Day brew, Beer to Drink Music To '17, will dominate Downtown Spirits for the day. It should be a pleasant reign: The blonde beer boasts tropical notes of kiwi and hibiscus. There will also be other Dogfish brews, a swag raffle, and free tastes. Downtown Spirits, 2300 Seventh Ave, Sat April 22, 4-7 pm, free.

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THINGS TO DO **ARTS & CULTURE**

Boards, April 20-22, 8 pm, Sun April 23, 5 pm, \$23/\$25
Lost Falls: Nordo's Culinarium, Thurs-Sat, 8 pm, Sun, 6:30 pm, \$67-\$105, through June 25
Nadeshiko: Center Theater, Fri-Mon, \$25, through May 6
Ode: West of Lenin, Thurs-Sat, 7:30 pm, Sun, 2 pm, \$25, through May 20
Orlando: Glenn Hughes Penthouse Theater, Tues April 25, 7:30 pm, \$10
The Secret Garden: The 5th Avenue Theatre, Tues-Sun, \$29-\$121, through May 6

Complete listings at strangerthingstodo.com

FILM

Hyper-Normalisation

DON'T MISS On April 14, 1986, there was a knock at the door of my house in Harare, Zimbabwe. I was the one who opened the door and found three beefy men in dark suits. One was black; two were white. They all wanted the daughter of the US ambassador to Zimbabwe—who was my sister's friend and spending the night—to come with them immediately. The ambassador's daughter walked downstairs in her pajamas, walked out the door, walked into a black limo, and left with the Secret Service men. The next day, we learned that Libya had been bombed by Ronald Reagan. A deep and dark explanation for this episode at the end of the Cold War is provided in the BBC documentary *HyperNormalisation*. The doc also explains that the episode was one of many in a historical movement toward the "fake world" that now dominates the real world. Donald Trump is also in this documentary, but he is dealing with a Japanese gambler and has no idea he will become the fakest president in US history. (*Northwest Film Forum*, Sat April 22, 3 pm, free) **CHARLES MUDEDE**

We also recommend...

Anime Movie Festival: Cinerama, April 25-May 3
Bigger Than Life: Scarecrow Video, Wed April 19, 7 pm, free
Blue Velvet: SIFF Film Center, Fri April 21, 7 pm, Sat April 22, 4 pm, \$14
Championing Youth: The Amara Film Series: Majestic Bay, Tues April 25, 7 pm, free
Colossal: Guild 45th
Drone Cinema Film Festival: Chapel Performance Space, Sat April 22, 8-10 pm, \$5-\$15
Dune: SIFF Film Center, Sat April 22, 7 pm, Sun April 23, 4 pm, \$14
Early Spring: Seattle Art Museum, Thurs April 20, \$9, through May 18
The Fate of the Furious: Various locations
Get Out: Various locations
Gifted: Various locations
The Graduate 50th Anniversary: Pacific Place, Sun April 23, 2 and 7 pm, \$13
Haunting: Scarecrow Video, Thurs April 20, 7 pm, free
Imitation of Life: SIFF Film Center, Tues April 25, 7 pm, \$14
Lost Highway: SIFF Cinema Egyptian, Thurs April 20, 7 pm, \$14
NT Live: Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead: SIFF Cinema Uptown, Thurs April 20, 11 am and 6:30 pm, \$20
Other People: Scarecrow Video, Sun April 23, 7 pm, free
Personal Shopper: Varsity Theatre
Puget Soundtrack: Hair and Space Museum Presents THX 1138: Northwest Film Forum, Thurs April 20, 8 pm, \$16
They Live: Scarecrow Video, Sat April 22,

8 pm, free

This Is What Resistance Looks Like: Northwest Film Forum, Sun April 23, 7 pm, \$40/\$60

The Void: Grand Illusion

Complete listings at strangerthingstodo.com

ART

Josh Faught: Sanctuary

DON'T MISS Bay Area artist Josh Faught—winner of the 2009 Betty Bowen Award—uses textiles and collage to negotiate the shared histories of people and places. *Sanctuary*, a 45-foot textile installed on a pillar in Saint Mark's Cathedral, weaves memorabilia from Seattle's underground gay history together with lyrics from Belinda Carlisle's *Heaven on Earth*. The result is a contemplative work that queers the boundaries between the physical and the spiritual, the carnal and the ecstatic, the adherent and the outsider (Faught himself is Jewish). Add it to Saint Mark's Complaine Choir every Sunday night as another reason for art lovers to investigate this Capitol Hill house of worship. (*St. Mark's Cathedral*, daily, free, through July 2018) **EMILY POTHAST**

We also recommend...

50 Years of Pottery Northwest: Pottery Northwest, free, through April 28
Aftermath: Local Artists on African American Experience: Shoreline City Hall, Mon-Fri, free, through April 21
Alan Lau: Farmer's Market/ Harvesting Peaches From the Other Planet: ArtXchange, Tues-Sat, free, through May 27
All American: Three Centuries of Printmaking by American Immigrant Artists: Davidson Galleries, Tues-Sat, free, through April 29
Charles Emerson: Color Meditations: Harris Harvey Gallery, Tues-Sat, free, through April 29
Divine Ammunition: The Sculpture of Al Farrow: Bellevue Arts Museum, Wed-Sun, \$12, through May 7
Inye Wokoma: An Elegant Utility: Northwest African American Museum, Wed-Sun, \$7, through May 28
Jacob Lawrence: The Migration Series: Seattle Art Museum, Wed-Sun, \$25, through April 23
Jennifer West: Film Is Dead...: Seattle Art Museum, Wed-Sun, \$25, through May 7
Lauren Iida: How to Trap a Memory: ArtXchange, Tues-Sat, free, through April 29
Make Space Zine Issue #6 Release Party: Indian Summer, Fri April 21, 7-11 pm, free
Michael Kenna and Mark Thompson: G. Gibson Gallery, Wed-Sat, free, through April 22
Michelle de la Vega: The Sugar Project: Bridge Productions, Thurs-Sat, free, through April 29
Robert Pruitt: Planetary Survey: Prographica, Tues-Sat, free, through April 29
Seeing Nature: Landscape Masterworks from the Paul G. Allen Family Collection: Seattle Art Museum, Wed-Sun, \$25, through May 23
Stanza: Push/Pull, opening reception Thurs Apr 20, 6-10 pm, free, through May 16
Who Am I / Who I Am: Fred Wildlife Refuge, April 19-20, 7-10 pm, \$5-\$45, 21+
WTF Joan Mitchell?: Seattle Artist League, Sun April 23, 12:30-3:30 pm, \$20

Complete listings at strangerthingstodo.com


Continued ►

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THINGS TO DO **ARTS & CULTURE**

FOOD & DRINK

Neon Taco Bell Night

DON'T MISS It's 4/20, everyone's favorite arbitrary, urban-legend-based stoner holiday. Where it once was the touchstone of a semi-secret society of pot enthusiasts, it's fast becoming a marketing bonanza the likes of Black Friday or Valentine's Day. However, there is still some weirdness left in weed, and what better way to celebrate it than by visiting Neon Taco for their "Neon Taco Bell" menu? Monica Dimas has transmogrified her already stoner-friendly menu into an even more stoner-friendly Taco Bell knockoff, replete with Doritos nachos and Doritos-shell tacos, and it's available all day on 4/20. Thursday is also DJ night at Nacho Borracho, so you can get high as a kite, stuff yourself with exquisitely terrible food, and dance yourself into blissful oblivion. Hell, if you work in the weed industry, your boss probably won't even be surprised when you call in sick the next day. (Neon Taco, Thurs April 20, 3 pm-1:30 am) **TOBIAS COUGHLIN-BOGUE**

We also recommend...

Bongwater Galore, 4/20: So Great You Won't Remember: Uber Tavern, Thurs

April 20, 4-8 pm, free

Classics & Mixology Basics Cocktail Class: E. Smith Mercantile, Thurs April 20,

6-8 pm, \$75

Elevated Coffee Experience: Trichome, Fri April 21, 6-8 pm, free

Food & Identity: A Taste of Puerto Rico with Eric Rivera: Bookstore Bar, Tues April 25, 6-8 pm, \$40

Guest Chef Night: Maximillian Petty: FareStart, Thurs April 20, 5:30-8 pm, \$29.95

Happy Hour Food Walk: Chinatown-International District, Thurs April 20, 4-7 pm, free

Kraken Congee Two-Year Anniversary: Kraken Congee, Thurs April 20, 5 pm-midnight, free

Complete listings at strangerthingstodo.com

QUEER

Miss Richfield 1981: 2020 Vision

DON'T MISS What on earth is Miss Richfield 1981? For years, this Midwestern maven has been winning hearts from Minnesota to the coasts with folksy wisdom and frilly couture, and after charming the pants off of Provincetown, Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York, she'd finally deigned to examine Seattle. She's debuting a brand-new show just for us, and she promises to offer a message of hope—or at least survival—for this wild new world in which we find ourselves living. Expect an evening of comedy, videos, storytelling, and songs, some of which Miss Richfield may actually remember the words to. (Century Ballroom, April 20-21, 8 pm, \$30/\$175) **MATT BAUME**

We also recommend...

Mimosas Cabaret: Unicorn, Sat-Sun, 1 pm, \$25, through May 28, 21+

Trans & Genderqueer Open Mic: Transgender HIV Testing Day: Gay City, Tues April 18, 7-9 pm, free

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THINGS TO DO MUSIC

Noteworthy Shows This Week

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Thunderpussy
Fri April 21
at Chop Suey

MATHEW TUCCILARONE

WEDNESDAY 4/19

Mount Eerie, Lori Goldston

(Neptune, all ages) Phil Elverum's music under the Mount Eerie moniker has always been extremely intimate—an attribute inherent in his soft-spoken vocal delivery and largely acoustic guitar-based arrangements. But over the years, Elverum's modest instrumentation has become increasingly majestic, with his expanding arsenal of instruments and resourceful recording techniques creating a lush world where even the lone sustained fuzzed-out bass notes on 2015's *Sauna* take on a symphony of micro-tones. In the wake of the passing of his wife, Geneviève, Elverum channeled his anguish into *A Crow Looked at Me*, an album that explores death not through metaphors but through the literal details of life in the aftermath of loss. By eschewing the platitudes that often accompany the discussion of death, Elverum has made both his most deeply intimate album and a profound stand-alone examination of grief. **BRIAN COOK**

Skeptä

(Neumos, all ages) North London's reigning champ, MC/producer/DJ Skeptä, leads the charge of grime's most recent surge of popularity in North America—as a veteran rapper and low-key athleisure icon. As the internet flattens regional scenes, the insular, spare roadman style, American club excesses, and spacey SoundCloud swag rap all make comfortable flatmates, as evinced on Skeptä's excellent 2016 album *Konnichiwa*, which signaled his arrival in the colonies. Kanye needed

him there when he performed on the Brits, and Drake even petitioned to join his crew, the legendary grime label Boy Better Know. As hip-hop's biggest cool hunters align themselves, this particular British empire just grows. The last time mans tried touring the US, visa issues stymied his rollout—but now he's ready to bring his raucous nobody-smiling shit-talk to Seattle, and let's hope it's *shutdown* (in a good way). **LARRY MIZELL JR.**

NailPolish, Mommy Long Legs, Softboys

(Timbre Room) I'd reckon when most of your city's top groups practice in your basement every day, it's hard to NOT wanna see them play live in public, so for a while now the popular Capitol Hill practice space Crybaby Studios has been putting on locals-only shows like tonight's rock action. Mommy Long Legs shred noisy rock and reverb-dunked 1970s/'80s punk; they're self-described as "barf-core/fart-core." Actually, they don't stink TOO much like farts! Bookending MLL are Softboys (not Robyn Hitchcock's Soft Boys), but rather local Day-Glo punks who play knowing 1970s punk, and NailPolish, who play raucous, contemporary post-punk. All of tonight's jams will be framed by visuals from Daisy Heroin. **MIKE NIPPER**

THURSDAY 4/20

Seagaze Festival

(Lo-Fi, April 20–23) Shoegaze rock is accruing momentum akin to that of the jam-band circuit, with festivals dedicated to the gauzy, dreamy subgenre, reunion tours by the original

key players, and growing acceptance from major media outlets. For the second year, Seagaze Festival showcases this oft-transcendent music with 19 acts over four nights. Thursday be sure to check out the Malady of Sevendials, a family of teenage brooders evoking the hushed splendors of Cocteau Twins and A.R. Kane. Friday is stacked with reliable psych-leaning vets like Kingdom of the Holy Sun, This Blinding Light, Black Nite Crash, and the *kosmische* solo-guitar sojourns of God & Vanilla. Saturday, producer extraordinaire/Stranger Genius Erik Blood flies in from LA to school everyone on lush textures and luscious melodies, while the songs of fest organizer Jeff McCollough's band, Blackpool Astronomy, whiplash you like prime-time Swervedriver. Sunday, scope Portland's Coloring Electric Like, who rampage beautifully, like a Northwestern My Bloody Valentine. These are but a small sampling of artists who strive to swirl your brain cells into a purple haze of bliss. **DAVE SEGAL**

Jóhann Jóhannsson with American Contemporary Music Ensemble

(Benaroya Hall, all ages) Icelandic composer Jóhann Jóhannsson excels at combining the sweeping melodies of fellow countrymen Sigur Rós with a modern classical sound palette. He first broke through with the Pitchfork-approved *Englabörn*, which fused the impressionistic minimalism of Erik Satie, the spiritual stylings of Arvo Pärt, and electronic glitch textures not far away from the likes of Oval and even early Tim Hecker. While the composer continued to release one acclaimed album after another over the course of the decade, Jóhannsson has arisen as one of the most

in-demand film and television composers of our time, striking up a highly fruitful relationship with the French-Canadian filmmaker Denis Villeneuve, for whom he's composed scores for *Arrival*, *Sicario*, and *Prisoners* alongside James Marsh's *The Theory of Everything*. Jóhannsson's next film project is perhaps his most anticipated, as he will rejoin Villeneuve to pen the score for the director's *Blade Runner 2049*. This is a must-see event for modern classical and music fans of all stripes. **NICK ZURKO**

Bing & Ruth, Zen Mother

(Fremont Abbey, all ages) Pianist David Moore's ambient-modern classical ensemble Bing & Ruth's meteoric rise from tiny RVNG Intl. band to big indie 4AD reflects an increased interest in ambient music. The genre has evolved beyond what its pioneer Brian Eno could have anticipated, and Bing & Ruth exemplify this evolution. Started in 2006 by university-trained Moore, the project was born of his desire to create "minimalist ensemble music with a certain filmic sensitivity, one that prioritized grace and texture over the style's once-radical subtraction." After the subtle, gradual melodies found on the 11-piece recording *City Lake*, Moore pared the group to seven members for their breakthrough album, *Tomorrow Was the Golden Age*. That work's more succinct and melodic sound led to the band signing to 4AD to release *No Home of the Mind* in February. Featuring clarinet, two bassists, Moore on piano, and a tape-delay Opteron, Bing & Ruth create slow-building, breathtaking music that should appeal to fans of Stars of the Lid, Erik Satie, and Jóhann Jóhannsson. **NICK ZURKO**

Continued ►



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APRIL 22 | 8:00PM

FLIGHT TO MARS

with THUNDERPUSSY

MAY 12 | 9:00PM

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APRIL 29 | 8:00PM

KONGOS

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MAY 14 | 8:00PM

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W. KAMAU BELL

MAY 24
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THINGS TO DO MUSIC

FRIDAY 4/21

RJD2, Tortoise, the 1939 Ensemble

(Showbox, all ages) Two Midwestern instrumental heavyweights with backgrounds in electronic music come together in this exciting Friday night bill. Tortoise purvey mostly-instrumental post-rock that is heavy on the experimentation but still mostly accessible, calling on prog, avant jazz, minimalism, dub, krautrock, and even occasional shades of exotica and funk. Seventh and latest *The Catastrophist* finds the Chicago five-piece dipping into 1980s retro-tech synthscapes, their dark, pressing, churning quality segueing into quieter, more studied moments. RJD2 has a groove-saturated, funk and hiphop-oriented style driven by his undisputed turntable chops; his live setup finds him solo, jumping between four of them to build his dance-hawking songs. He's issued six albums, the most recent being 2016's *Dame Fortune*, which features longtime collaborators like soul-blues crooner Son Little and fellow Columbus native, the rhyme-slinging Blueprint. **LEILANI POLK**

Antibalas, Polyrythmics

(Nectar, all ages) Seeing NYC mainstay Antibalas play is akin to feeling like you've been invited to a lively tropical party that has one foot in the sun-soaked 1970s, where Fela Kuti & Africa 70 reigned with brass-splashed, percussion-fueled Afrobeat, and another in the present, fusing jazz, dub, and funk with tight prowess and much playfulness. Nigerian-British vocalist/conga player Duke Amayo leads the charge with exotic bilingual vocals, conga thumping and battering, and martial arts-inspired dance moves, while the ensemble—which ranges from 12 to 15 people in live settings—supports with guitars that fluctuate

from wet wah-wah textures to grittier riffs, thick throbbing bass lines, chugging and slinking rhythms, and bright, urgent brass from a multi-piece section led by bari sax player and band founder Martin Perna. **LEILANI POLK**

Thunderpussy, Fauna Shade, Wild Powers, Aan, Sleeping Lessons

(Chop Suey) Thunderpussy's Molly Sides blends snarl, sneer, dance, provocation, and tease into a bracing power-pointed presentation. The band also sometimes bring their own dancers along! Fauna Shade conjure the aching regrets of the Jesus and Mary Chain, with some fuzzbox, though not the Chain's full-on feedback wars, thrown in. Wild Powers feature two ladies and one gentleman (the drummer's especially hyper), their grunge distortion flying around so thick, I can't quite tell where the bass sounds come out (nobody plays that instrument). Aan's music has plenty of space, but they sound cleaner than Fauna Shade—everything threatens to float away from everything else. Sleeping Lessons create dream pop—or at least, daydream pop. (Figuring most people's actual dreams aren't this tasty.) **ANDREW HAMLIN**

SATURDAY 4/22

Giorgio Moroder

(Neptune, all ages) Seventy-six years into his life, Italian DJ Giorgio Moroder may be at the pinnacle of his career. It's difficult to think of another electronic artist who can say the same. For sure, Moroder has had many peaks. The pioneer of Italian disco, Moroder produced international hit singles for many artists in the 1970s and '80s. He even has a cowriting credit on David Bowie's "Cat People." Electronic dance music would likely not exist if not for

him. Recently, though, he's released a hit album, 2015's *Déjà Vu*, and has seen synth-wave artists like Perturbator splice his sonic vocabulary with video-game soundtracks. **JOSEPH SCHAFER**

The Zombies: Odessey and Oracle 50th Anniversary

(Showbox) Do you want to witness one of the 20 greatest rock albums re-created in its entirety by blokes old enough to be your father/grandfather? Yes, you bloody do. As long as core members Rod Argent (keyboards/vocals) and Colin Blunstone (vocals) are involved, a Zombies show is a can't-miss, even half a century on from the group's peak. After hundreds of listens, *Odessey and Oracle* still sounds like a paragon of poignant psychedelic pop, rendered in orchestral splendor and adorned with indelible melodies that are to cry for, sung in the honeyest of tones by the angelically melancholy Blunstone. **DAVE SEGAL**

Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares

(Town Hall, all ages) Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares caused a sensation in the mid 1980s when 4AD boss Ivo Watts-Russell issued a 1975 compilation of their music on his cult label. Why? Because these Bulgarian women sang (mostly a cappella) the saddest, most beautiful songs you've never heard before in your godforsaken life. The pieces sound ancient and as precious as your favorite house of worship's stained glass, eternal and holy, even to the most skeptical atheist. You will sob for reasons you can't explain, as these *voix Bulgares* make Cocteau Twins' Liz Fraser sound like Charli XCX. If there's a heaven, le Mystère des Voix Bulgares are serenading the hell out of it. (The choir now consists of

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4/20
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4/21
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4/22
SATURDAY



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4/23
SUNDAY



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4/25
TUESDAY



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Colleen Green Band, The Malady of Sevendials
All ages

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ALBUM RELEASE



Tuesday 7/11
BEACH FOSSILS



Saturday 8/26
FRANKIE COSMOS

4/27 ALLISON CHAINS 4/28 SOFI TUKKER 4/29 DEVIN THE DUDE 4/30 HOWIE DAY 5/2 LEWIS WATSON 5/3 MURS 5/5 THE CAVE SINGERS 5/6 SON VOLT 5/11 PRINCESS NOKIA 2 SHOWS! 5/12 MEKLIT 5/16 JMSN 5/17 PETE YORN 5/19 FORTUNATE YOUTH 5/26 LOUIS FUTON 5/27 FLYNT FLOSSY AND TURQUOISE JEEP 5/30 THE HOT BRASS BAND 6/2 VALERIE JUNE 6/5 WAVVES

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THINGS TO DO MUSIC

23 female vocalists, one or two male soloists, and five musicians.) **DAVE SEGAL**

Drone Cinema Film Festival

(Chapel Performance Space, all ages) Last year's Drone Cinema Film Festival at Grand Illusion yielded synergistic dazzlements between poetic, mesmerizing images and rigorous ambient music. Expect more of that tonight at the bigger, acoustically superior Chapel Performance Space. Created and curated by David Lynch's assistant music editor for *Twin Peaks* and *Wild at Heart*, Kim Cascone, Drone Cinema presents transcendental experiences through sound and vision. Eight films and soundtracks by the likes of AUME, Phillipe Neau, Kat Cascone, and others will be complemented by a live set from sublime local drone ensemble bitès. If you're into sacred minimalists like Terry Riley and La Monte Young and experimental film, immerse yourself in these heady atmospheres. **DAVE SEGAL**

SUNDAY 4/23

Windhand, Hell, Un

(Neumos) There are so many metal bands bowing at the altar of Sleep that it can be difficult to make the whole "maybe this record is supposed to play at 45 rpm?" thud-and-lurch strategy sound inspired, no matter how big the kick drum or how many Orange full stacks you add to the mix. But Richmond's Windhand breathe new life into Southern metal by mercifully avoiding obvious classic-rock scales, doomy atonality, and throwaway vocals. Instead, they offer simple but striking riffs supplemented by the melodic counterpoint of Dorthia Cottrell's airy voice. And yes, they've dialed in a particular tonal sweet spot in their arsenal of vintage guitars, diode fuzz

pedals, and wall of amplifiers. Can we please round up all the Black Wizard Mountain Witch bands and have Windhand give 'em a tutorial on doing this style effectively? Thank you. **BRIAN COOK**

MONDAY 4/24

The xx, Sampha

(WaMu Theatre, all ages) The xx have their woozy, dream-pop-with-an-edge factory party standard down pat, so let's talk about Sampha. Nina Simone often spoke on the responsibility of artists to reflect the issues of their time through their work, thereby providing both creative interpretations and new perspectives on how to respond. Sampha delves into our current reality's harsher glares, like the obstacles facing the safety of black men, being haunted by former lovers, and the deaths of friends and family, with the benevolent honesty of uninhibited soul music. Despite the density of the subject matter in his debut full-length, *Process*, Sampha's skillful production—a marriage of classical traditions and newer electronic modes—expands the mood by lowering the listener into a brain-massaging bowl of ice water. The nature of this crystalline realm, populated by the effervescence of pure-hearted falsetto, arctic synths, and blinking emotional touchstones, allows your mind to wander freely around the perimeter of his deep, creative memory. **KIM SELLING**

TUESDAY 4/25

Spiral Stairs, Pale Noise, Mystic Soul Potion

(Sunset) With Pavement and Preston School of Industry in his rearview mirror, Scott Kannberg, aka Spiral Stairs, emerges as full-fledged solo

artist on *Doris and the Daggers*. The follow-up to *The Real Feel* took eight years to materialize, as Kannberg spent time in Seattle and Brisbane, started a family, and lost close friend Darius Minwalla, with whom he had planned to collaborate (drummers from Broken Social Scene and Shudder to Think filled in). The result is a well-crafted pop gem with excursions into glam disco and acid country that plays more like Australia in the 1980s than America in the 2010s. Now based in Mexico, Kannberg recorded in California with Kelley Stoltz and the National's Matt Berninger, who sings on the Go-Betweens-esque "Exiled Tonight." **KATHY FENNESSY**

The Wedding Present, Colleen Green Band, Malady of Sevendials

(Crocodile, all ages) Sensitive indie-rock enthusiasts already know and adore the Wedding Present for their lovelorn, John Peel-lauded UK jangle. Forming in 1985 amid the original C86-style British indie-pop scene with shimmering, fast guitars and wistful, romantic lyrics, the Wedding Present developed a cult fan base over the next decade but never attained Smiths-level popularity, as they deserved. In 2012, David Gedge and company toured behind their Steve Albini-produced 1991 album, *Seamonsters*, following with a tour of their debut, *George Best*, the next year. The band also worked with Albini to rerecord *George Best* for its 30th-anniversary reissue, due out later this year. The 1987 version of *Best* sees the band at their brightest and jangliest, but Albini's production also helped *Seamonsters* to become their heaviest and most bass-centric record. This collaboration brings WP fans something to anticipate after the 2016 release of their ninth album, *Going, Going*. **BRITTNI FULLER**

NEUMOS
COMING UP NEXT

THURSDAY 4/20

COSMOS

ROMARO FRANCESCA + PARIS ALEXA
+ LUNA GOD (DJ SET)

SATURDAY 4/22

G JONES

YHETI + SAYER

SUNDAY 4/23

WINDHAND

HELL + UN

FRIDAY 4/28

POND

KIRIN J CALLINAN

SATURDAY 4/29

BOWIEVISION

PURPLE MANE

THURSDAY 5/4

LUSINE

MALIDONT +
TYLER SWAN RADIO IN TUNNELS

FRIDAY 5/5

HOME SWEET HOME

CHARLIE AND THE RAYS +
LOWLANDS + SLEEPING LESSONS

SATURDAY 5/6

COM TRUISE + CLARK

ROLAND TINGS

SUNDAY 5/7

GEOGRAPHER

BARBOZA
COMING UP NEXT

THURSDAY 4/20

YEAR OF DEATH +

WESTERN HAUNTS

HEADWAVES + DJ KATE

FRIDAY 4/21

KATIE KATE

DONORMAAL

SATURDAY 4/22

NE-HI

WEEKNITES

SUNDAY 4/23

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SAT 4/22 // 10pm 4/4 Music
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SUN 4/23 // 10pm HOUSE MUSIC
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THEATER

THU - SAT 4/20 - 4/22 // 7pm // \$20
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Sun 4/23
AMERICAN TROUBADOUR
JOE PURDY
LYDIA RAMSEY
8PM \$20/\$22

Mon 4/24
WWE HALL OF FAMER
JAKE "THE SNAKE" ROBERTS
ALEX KOOLAIDE ANSEL
8PM \$25 (\$55 VIP)

Sat 4/22
THE CACTUS BLOSSOMS
COUNTRY LIPS, JACK KLATT
9PM \$12 / \$15

UP & COMING
4/21 THE RAMBLIN' YEARS
4/26 FUTUREBIRDS 4/27 SUNNY SWEENEY
4/28 HELIO SEQUENCE
4/29 REVEREND HORTON HEAT & DALE WATSON

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WED 4/19

LIVE MUSIC

BARBOZA Bears and Other Carnivores, Caargo, Crystal & Quiet, 8 pm, \$10
CENTRAL SALOON Pink Muscles, Bob Bucko Jr., Slow Elk, 9 pm-1 am
CHOP SUEY Polariser, Head Band, Dumb Thumbs, 8 pm, \$8
CROCODILE ★ Shura with Cuff Lynx, 8 pm, \$13; Julia Jacklin with Gold Star, 9 pm, \$11
★ ETHNIC CULTURAL THEATER RainyDawg Radio's 14th Birthday Fest, 7-11 pm, \$7/\$13
HIGH DIVE Falta, Handsome & Gretyl, Tyson Mosenbocker, Surrogate, 6 pm, \$10/\$14
★ NECTAR Bilal, SassyBlack, Ghost-Note, 8 pm, \$20/\$25
PARLIAMENT TAVERN Deadgrass, 8-11 pm, free
THE ROYAL ROOM Joanne Rand & Reggie Garrett, 7-9 pm, free
SEAMONSTER Unsinkables, 9:30 pm, \$5
★ SHOWBOX SODO Two Door Cinema Club, 8 pm, \$35
★ SHOWBOX Real Estate, Tim Cohen, ijl, 9 pm, \$20/\$23
★ STUDIO SEVEN SYKOSIS, Beneath A Dying Sun, Guests, 7:30 pm, \$10
SUBSTATION 3-Piece Bikini (Summer Babes), Scott Garred, Robert Deeble, 8 pm, \$8
SUNSET TAVERN Niagara Moon, Origami Ghosts, History of Time, 9 pm, \$8
THERAPY LOUNGE James V. Roy Rodgers, Ghost Soda, 8 pm-1 am
TRACTOR TAVERN Left Coast Country, Grateful Bluegrass Boys, 8 pm, \$10
TRIPLE DOOR Lady Rizo, 7:30 pm, \$18

JAZZ

ANCHOR PUB NW Jazz Collective, 7-9 pm
VITO'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE Brad Gibson Presents, 9 pm

DJ

BASTILLE CAFE BAR Le Verlan with DJ Paces Lift, 8-11 pm, free
CONTOUR Depth, 9 pm, free
THE EAGLE MENERGY: A Night of Disco & Debauchery, 9 pm, free
FOUNDATION Substance Wednesdays, 10 pm, \$0-10
LO-FT Loving Touch, 9 pm-2 am, free
★ NECTAR Bilal, SassyBlack, Ghost-Note, 8 pm, \$20/\$25
Q NIGHTCLUB Forms: Noer The Boy, 9 pm-2 am, \$11

CLASSICAL

★ TOWN HALL Project Trio: Peter & The Wolf, 7:30 pm, \$10-\$20

THURS 4/20

LIVE MUSIC

BARBOZA Year of Death + Western Haunts, Dual Release, Headwaves, DJ Kate, 8 pm, \$8
CENTRAL SALOON Hounds of the Wild Hunt, Magpies,

Chrome Lakes, Medicine Bows, 8 pm, \$7/\$10
COLUMBIA CITY THEATER Crash the Glass, 8 pm
CONOR BYRNE Matty Charles & Katie Rose, Missoni Lanza, 8 pm, \$8
THE FUNHOUSE Sadafrican, The Sun Machine, Basement Surfers, Tiny Room, 8 pm, \$6/\$8
HIGHWAY 99 Trailer Park Kings, 8 pm, \$7
THE KRACKEN BAR & LOUNGE Kontatto, Konform, Toe Cutter, 9 pm-2 am, \$7
★ LASER DOME AT PACIFIC SCIENCE CENTER Soltree, 8 pm, \$15/\$18
★ NECTAR Dead Prez, Ras Kass, King Leez, DJ Indica Jones, 8 pm, \$15/\$20
★ NEUMOS Cosmos, Romaro Franceswa, Paris Alexa, Luna God, 8 pm, \$12
PONY Pony 4/20: SSDD, Master Bedroom, GooGoo, DJ Jermaine, 9 pm-2 am, \$5
RENDEZVOUS The Broadcast, Falon Sierra, Happy Heartbreak, 9 pm, \$7
SEAMONSTER Aqua Soul, 9:30 pm, free/\$5
★ SEATTLE ART MUSEUM Hearing Nature: Morgan Henderson, 7-7:30 pm, free
SUBSTATION Three Chord Killer, The Thorium Switch, Relicidice, 8 pm, \$8
SUNSET TAVERN The Walters, Summer Salts, Close Encounter, 9 pm, \$8
★ TRACTOR TAVERN Sustainable Sounds: Cataldo, Sisters, Goodbye Heart, Acapulco Lips, Prom Queen, 8 pm, \$15
★ TRIPLE DOOR March to May with Devin Sinha, 7 pm, \$15/\$18
TULA'S Fred Hoadley's Sonando, 8 pm, \$10
VERMILLION Siren: Flute & Voice Recital, 8-10 pm, \$10

JAZZ

★ BARCA Jazz at Barca, 9 pm-midnight, free
★ JAZZ ALLEY Earl Klugh, 7:30 pm, \$34.50
THE ROYAL ROOM 4/20 Madness, 7:30 pm, \$10

DJ

BALLROOM Throwback Thursdays, 9 pm, free
CHOP SUEY Special Blends: Timbaland vs The Neptunes, 9 pm, free
CONTOUR Jaded, 9 pm, free
★ HAVANA Sophisticated Mama, 9 pm, free
NAKED CITY BREWERY & TAPHOUSE Vinyl Me Please presents THE SPINS, 6 pm
Q NIGHTCLUB Studio 4/4: Guy Gerber, 9 pm-2 am, \$15
R PLACE Thirsty Thursdays, 9 pm, free
TIMBRE ROOM BUTT DAY, 10 pm-2 am, \$5
TRINITY Beer Pong Thursdays, 9 pm, free

FRI 4/21

LIVE MUSIC

★ BARBOZA Katie Kate with DoNormaal, 7 pm, \$10
CENTRAL SALOON Myke Bogan with Chase Henny, 9 pm, \$10
COLUMBIA CITY THEATER Emily McVicker, 7 pm, free
CONOR BYRNE Deception Past, Brooke & Dawn, The Gus Clark Band, 9 pm, \$8

★ CROCODILE San Fermin with Low Roar, 7:30 pm, \$15
DARRELL'S TAVERN Storm Rider, Chris Mess, Mainstreet Struggleville, 9 pm-2 am, \$8
FREMONT ABBEY Jason Webley, Pepper Proud, Chris Poage, 8 pm, \$10-\$15
THE FUNHOUSE Ape Machine, Gozu, Dogs of War, 8 pm, \$8/\$10
HARD ROCK CAFE Headswell, 8 pm, \$10/\$12
HIGH DIVE Greenriver Thrillers, Kings of Cavalier, Skullbot, Stereo Creeps, 8 pm, \$8/\$10; The Definitive Pearl Jam Tribute: Washed In Black with Stargazer, 8 pm, \$7/\$10
HIGHLINE Govinda, Wildabeast, Noiz, Jawz, 9 pm, \$12
HIGHWAY 99 Kalimba, 8 pm, \$20
THE KRACKEN BAR & LOUNGE Four Lights, Ramona, Date Night with Brian, The Botherations, 9 pm-2 am, \$7
★ NEUMOS The Motet with McTuff, 8 pm, \$20
THE ROYAL ROOM Prince: A Memorial Celebration, 9 pm, \$10/\$15
SLIM'S LAST CHANCE Redneck Girlfriend, K-Streets, Jamie Nova Sky, Stereo Embers, 9 pm, \$15
SUNSET TAVERN Antonioni, Temple Canyon, Season of Strangers, 9 pm, \$10
TIM'S TAVERN Rikkha with Half Breed, 8 pm
TRACTOR TAVERN Ramblin' Years, The Hasslers, High Divide, 9 pm, \$10
★ VERA PROJECT Sundae Crush & Baywitch, 7:30 pm, \$8/\$10
WAMU THEATER Deadmau5, 8:30 pm-1:30 am, \$35

JAZZ

★ JAZZ ALLEY Earl Klugh, 9:30 pm, \$34.50
LATONA PUB Phil Sparks Trio, 5 pm, free

DJ

ASTON MANOR House Party Fridays, 10 pm-2 am, \$20
BALLROOM Rendezvous Fridays, 10 pm, free
★ BALTIC ROOM Juicy, \$10
BARBOZA Famous Fridays, 10:30 pm, free
FOUNDATION Resonate Fridays, 9 pm-2 am, \$15-\$30
HAVANA Viva Havana, 9 pm, \$15
KREMWERK WORK! with J.Worra, 10 pm, \$10
NEIGHBOURS Absolut Fridays, 9 pm-4 am
Q NIGHTCLUB Mint: Henski, Rise Over Run, Mack Long, Kemyst, 10 pm, \$10
R PLACE Transcendence: with DJ E, 9:30 pm
★ RE-BAR Soul-Fi, 10 pm, \$0-\$10
SUBSTATION Seattle Psy Ops: Psymatic, 9 pm-4 am, \$12/\$17
TIMBRE ROOM Foolish Fridays, 10 pm-2:30 am, \$5/\$10; Dub Diaspora, 6-10 pm, free
TRINITY Massive Fridays, free
VERMILLION Session Fridays, 10 pm-2 am, free

CLASSICAL

MEANY HALL Emerson String Quartet with Craig Sheppard, 7:30 pm, \$43-\$48

SAT 4/22

LIVE MUSIC

BARBOZA NE-HI with Weeknites, 7 pm
BLACK LODGE Elephant Rifle, Sashay, Glose, Great Goddamn, 9 pm, \$5-\$10
BLUE MOON TAVERN The Staxx Brothers with DJ Jamie Simmonds, 9 pm, \$10
COLUMBIA CITY THEATER Emily McVicker, 7 pm, free
CONOR BYRNE A Benefit for First Aid Arts: RL Heyer & Friends, 9 pm, \$8
EL CORAZON Fifth Angel, Palooka, Hellbilly, 8 pm, \$10/\$12
THE FUNHOUSE The Relationship, Cotillon, Goat Reward, Versing, 8 pm, \$8/\$10
★ GALLERY 1412 Anti-Show: Wynne Greenwood, Christopher Jones, Paul Hiraga, 7 pm, \$10
HARD ROCK CAFE One Gun Shy, 8 pm, \$10/\$15
HIGH DIVE Bleeding Heart Militia ACLU Benefit: The Black Tones, Dr. Quinn & The Medicine Woman, Radical Hearts, Norma Baker & Friends, Michael Wohl, 8 pm, \$10
HIGHLINE Warsaw Poland Bros, Skabins, Bad Habit, Nation Underdog: Local Chaos Ska Fest 2017, 8:30 pm, \$10/\$12
HIGHWAY 99 DreamWreck with Robbie Christmas, 8 pm, \$18
LUCKY LIQUOR HIM, Phnk, Speaker Child, HGR, 9 pm-midnight, \$5/\$8
NECTAR Las Cafeteras, En Canto, Edna Vazquez, Ella, ¡Manos Arriba!, 8 pm, \$12/\$16
NEUMOS G Jones, Yheti, Sayer, 8 pm, \$15
THE ROYAL ROOM The Jelly Rollers, Derek Burns, Paundy, 8 pm, \$10
SKYLARK CAFE & CLUB Alluvion, Klymmy's, Your City Sleeps, Rambis, 9 pm-midnight
SLIM'S LAST CHANCE Cheryl & Nikki's 50th Birthday with A Tribute to the Kinks, 9 pm, \$12
SUNSET TAVERN Kelli Schaefer, Fine Prince, Colorworks, 9 pm, \$10
TRACTOR TAVERN The Cactus Blossoms, Jack Klatt, Guests, 9 pm, \$12
WAMU THEATER Deadmau5, 8:30 pm-12:30 am, \$35

JAZZ

★ BENAROYA HALL Louis Armstrong: A New Orleans State of Mind, 7:30 pm, \$15-\$49
★ JAZZ ALLEY Earl Klugh, 9:30 pm, \$34.50
★ TOWN HALL Kevin Connor with Swing 3PO, 11 am, \$5
VITO'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE Jerry Zimmerman, 6 pm, free

DJ

ASTON MANOR NRG Saturdays, 10 pm, free
BALLARD LOFT DJ Saturdays, 10 pm, free
BALLROOM Sinful Saturdays, 9 pm, free
BALTIC ROOM Crave Saturdays, 10 pm
BARBOZA Hey Now!, 10:30 pm, free
CHOP SUEY Dance Yourself

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4.19 Wednesday (Soul/R&B)

BILAL

Sassyblack, Ghost-Note

4.20 Thursday (Hip Hop)

DEAD PREZ

Ras Kass, King Leez, DJ Indica Jones

4.21 Friday (Afrobeat/Funk)

EARLY SHOW W/ ANTIBALAS

Polyrhythms

4.22 Saturday (Latin)

LAS CAFETERASEn Canto, Edna Vazquez, Elia,
¡Manos Arriba!

4.23 Sunday (Funk/Americana)

**JEFFERSON ROSE BAND
& JELLY BREAD**

Far Out West

4.27 Thursday (Bluegrass)

HEAD FOR THE HILLSSpare Rib & the Bluegrass Sauce,
Sourwood Stringband

4.28 Friday (Grateful Dead Tribute)

THE GOLDEN ROAD

performs "Grateful Dead"

4.29 Saturday (Bluegrass)

HOT BUTTERED RUM

Cascade Crescendo

5.2 Tuesday (Instrumental Funk)

**BAZOOKA PICNIC &
UNSINKABLE HEAVIES**

5.3 Wednesday (World)

VIEUX FARKA TOURÉClinton Fearon (Solo Acoustic),
DJ Darek Mazzone**UP & COMING****EVERY MONDAY: MOJAM**

5.4

WALSHY FIRE

5.5

MOON HOOCH

5.6

TOMORROWS BAD SEEDS

5.7

CROW AND THE CANYON

5.9

STARLITO & DON TRIP

5.10

SCOTT PEMBERTON BAND

5.11

SIMIAN MOBILE DISCO

5.12

TRL TOTAL REQUEST LIVE

5.13

MARTYPARTY

5.14

JOE GODDARD

5.17

ERIC TOLLEFSON BAND

5.18

MELTDOWN SHOWDOWN

5.20

MARK FARINA-

MUSHROOM JAZZ

5.21

TOO MANY ZOOZ

5.23

DEVIN SINHA

5.24

TEEBs

5.25

"A GALAXY FAR, FAR

AWAY...THE CONCERT"

5.26

VAUDEVILLE ETIQUETTE

5.27

PIGS ON THE WING

5.30

LA INÉDITA

6.1

ANDY COE BAND

6.3

NITE WAVE

6.4

FRAMEWORKS

6.7

THE HIGH COUNCIL

6.8

MADCHILD

6.9

POOR MAN'S WHISKEY

6.10

CLINTON FEARON

6.11

JAH9

6.13

THE BLACK SEEDS

6.14

TARRUS RILEY

6.15

GREYBOY ALLSTARS

&16

(2 NIGHTS!)

6.23

EASY STAR ALL-STARS

6.30

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BENAROYA HALL Morlot Conducts Bruckner, 8 pm, \$22-\$122

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SUN 4/23

LIVE MUSIC

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BLUE MOON TAVERN Bakelite 78 with Snake Suspenderz, 9 pm, \$7

★ **BROADWAY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS** Arlo Guthrie, 7:30 pm, \$29-\$85

CENTRAL SALOON Chandler P with Guests, 9 pm, \$8

CONOR BYRNE Open Mic for the ACLU, 7:30 pm

★ **CROCODILE** Emily King, 8 pm, \$24

HIGH DIVE Stella Crest, Dweller On The Hill, The Backslide Gospel, 8 pm, \$6/\$8

HIGHLINE Intronaut, Bellwitch, Scriptures, Breag Noafa, 8 pm, \$12/\$14

LUCKY LIQUOR Three Fingers, Sunset Flip, MOMB, Appalachian Yard Art, 4-8 pm, \$5/\$8

NECTAR Jefferson Rose Band, Jelly Bread, Far Out West, 7:30 pm, \$7/\$10

★ **STUDIO SEVEN** Open Fate, 6:30 pm, \$10/\$12

SUNSET TAVERN Shagnasty, The Slags, Barring The Weather, 8 pm, \$8

TRACTOR TAVERN Joe Purdy, 9 pm, \$20

★ **TRIPLE DOOR** Anna Coogan & Willie B with Shasta Bree, 7:30 pm, \$12/\$15

JAZZ

ANCHOR PUB The Jazz Pearl, 7-10 pm

THE ANGRY BEAVER Jazz at the Beaver, 9 pm, free

DARRELL'S TAVERN Sunday Night Jazz Jam: Guests, 8 pm, free

★ **HARISSA** Sunday Bossa Nova, 6-9 pm, free

★ **JAZZ ALLEY** Earl Klugh, 7:30 pm, \$34.50

TRIPLE DOOR Brian Nova Jazz Jam, 7 pm, free

★ **TULA'S** Jim Cutler Jazz Orchestra, 7:30 pm, \$10

VITO'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE ★ The Ron Weinstein Trio, 9:30 pm, free; Bob Hammer, 6 pm, free

DJ

BALTIC ROOM Resurrection Sundays, 9 pm-2 am, \$5

CONTOUR Top A Top, 9 pm, free

CUFF Sunday Tea Dance, 5-11 pm, free

KREMWERK Fraktured, 9 pm-2 am, \$10

NEIGHBOURS Noche Latino, 10 pm-2 am, \$5

PONY The World's Tiniest Tea Dance, 4-9 pm, free

R PLACE Homo Hop, 10 pm

★ **RE-BAR** Flammable, 10 pm-3 am, \$10

TIMBRE ROOM Club Kid Cabaret & Strangeways, 10 pm-2 am, \$10

CLASSICAL

★ **NEPTUNE THEATRE** DAKHABRAKHA, 7:30 pm, \$35

NORDIC HERITAGE MUSEUM Mostly Nordic 2017, 4 pm, \$25-\$250

★ **ST. MARK'S CATHEDRAL** Compline Choir, 9:30 pm, free

MON 4/24

LIVE MUSIC

★ **CHOP SUEY** Taylor Bennett, 8 pm, \$12/\$15

HIGHLINE Mustard Gas and Roses with Old Iron, 9 pm, \$8/\$10

THE KRAKEN BAR & LOUNGE Young Go Hards, Despero, Heck Yes!, 9 pm, \$7

LO-FI Close Talker, Yurt, Loft Stills, Rainwater, 8 pm, \$7

SUBSTATION Blame the Wizards, Siren's Rain, Iron Nightingale, 9 pm, \$6

SUNSET TAVERN Evening Bell, Psychic Death, Ashely Shadow, 8 pm, \$8

JAZZ

THE ROYAL ROOM The Salute Sessions, 10 pm, free

DJ

BALTIC ROOM Jam Jam, 9 pm, \$10

★ **BAR SUE** Motown on Mondays, 10 pm, free

CLASSICAL

★ **BENAROYA HALL** Leif Ove Andnes & Marc-André Hamelin In Recital, 7:30 pm, \$25-\$123

TUE 4/25

LIVE MUSIC

HIGH DIVE WONGS, Ah God, On Drugs, 7 pm, \$6/\$8

★ **SEAMONSTER** Michael Owcharuk, 8 pm

SHADOWLAND Starlite Singer/Songwriter Showcase, 9 pm, free

★ **SHOWBOX SODO** Killswitch Engage and Anthrax with The Devil Wears Prada, 7 pm, \$36/\$40

★ **SHOWBOX** Super Duper Kyle with Cousin Stizz, 8 pm, \$18

★ **VERA PROJECT** Vacant Life, Rare Form, No Dice, Matriarch, Universal Peace, 7 pm, \$7

JAZZ

JAZZ ALLEY Lizz Wright, 7:30 pm, \$34.50

OWL N' THISTLE Jazz with Eric Verlinde, 8 pm, free

★ **THE ROYAL ROOM** Hopscotch, 7:30 pm, free

★ **TULA'S** The Cantaloupes, 7:30 pm, \$10

DJ

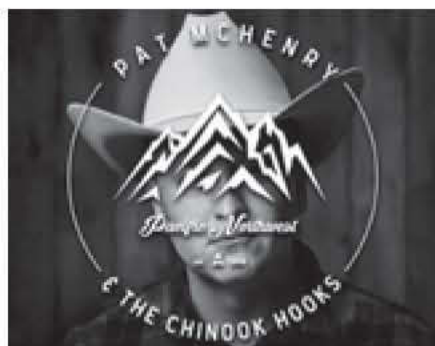
BALTIC ROOM Drum & Bass Tuesdays, 10 pm, free

★ **HAVANA** Real Love '90s, \$5/Free

★ **LO-FI** Stop Biting, 9 pm, \$5

CLASSICAL

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4/26 HIGH DIVE \$8

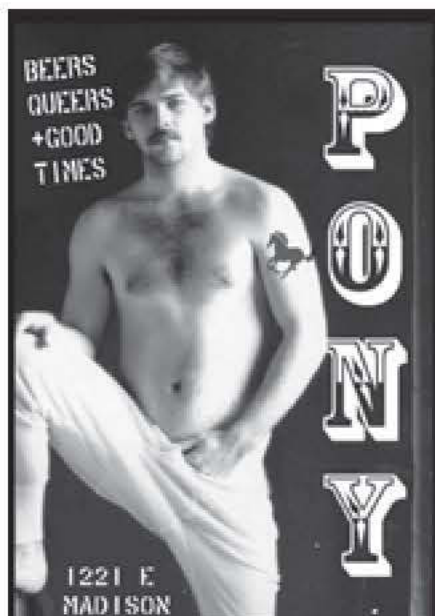
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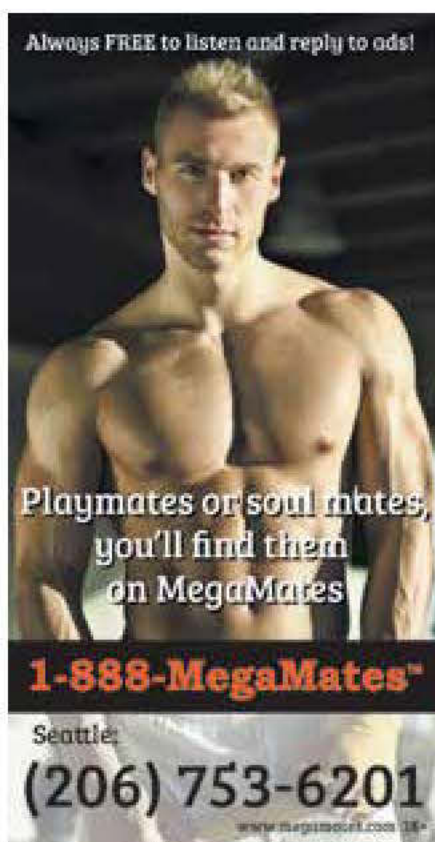
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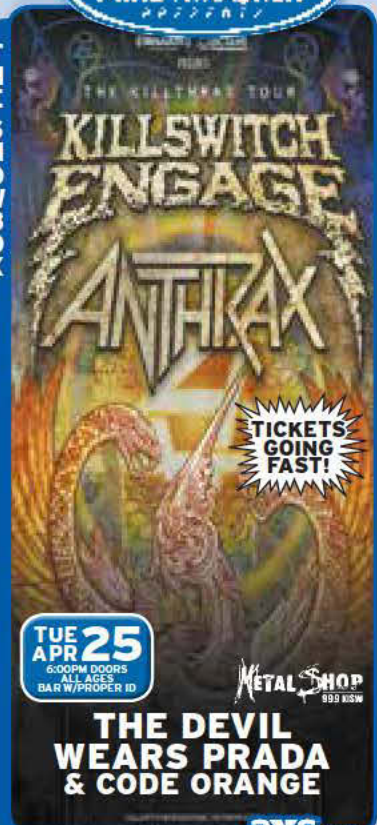
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MUSIC



GARAGELAND One of four record stores boosting Spokane's social capital.



RAJAR BOSE

The Luxury Economy

Spokane Is a Record-Store Boomtown

BY SEAN NELSON

When people are trying to assess the economic viability of a city, they tend to focus on the value of the real-estate market. It's not hard to understand why. The median price of houses and condos are concrete figures, and therefore less prone to arbitrary, race-and-class-blurred measurements like crime and employment. And though the 2014 census put home ownership rates at 64 percent nationwide, there are plenty of people among the remaining 36 percent to whom the idea of buying a house is as unfathomable and out-of-reach as the idea of building one. Which is to say: It's technically possible, I suppose, but let's be serious. It's probably never going to happen.

More to the point, however, housing prices are a reliable indicator of how much money people make in a given city. They don't tell you much about the actual quality of life there. For example, the news that Seattle's median home price in 2016 was \$624,000 might lead a sensible person to wonder why so much of the culture that made the city interesting and beloved has been forced to find a new place to live.

During *The Stranger's* fact-finding mission to Spokane, I didn't go looking for houses to buy. I sought out the kinds of places I'd want to spend my leisure time if I suddenly found myself living there. (Which, given the way Seattle is going, is hardly out of the question.)

This led me, naturally, to record stores, a weirdly thriving microeconomy among the steady growth of Spokane's urban life. With no real effort, I found my way to four excellent, apparently successful shops that sell a wide range of new and used vinyl, but also

function as informal gathering places for a community (i.e., people who still think, talk, live, and buy records) that is increasingly underserved and priced out of certain larger Northwest cities I could mention.

With the exception of the one guy who was born and raised here, the people who run these stores all came to Spokane—or, in some cases, back to Spokane—from points west (Seattle) and south (Arizona) for the same fundamental reason. Because you can live out the American promise: rent a reasonably priced home, lease a commercial space, conduct an honest trade, make a humble profit, and not feel like you've been turned into a drone in a corporate beehive or just another hateful sucker stuck in a perpetual traffic jam.

In the space of several hours spent browsing through the overlapping but interestingly distinctive crates of these shops—Groove Merchants, Resurrection Records, Garageland, and 4000 Holes—I was struck most not by the records but by the conversations. In between comparing notes on an old Donovan LP, people ask each other about their

kid's operation, about the work they had done on the tree in their yard, about their road trip from Moscow, about just how “progressive” the city council actually is, about whether or not they had seen *Mr. Robot*. These conversations proceeded at a leisurely pace, often while the participants flipped idly through records.

These were the kind of interactions you normally associate with cafes or barbershops, the kind of talk that reminds you of when conversations between people still happened face-to-face, in public spaces that made you

feel included in a community (as opposed to “community”) whether you were part of the talk or not. Because you can always cut in and say, “That record is amazing” or “I love *Mr. Robot*” or “Sorry about your son's rotator cuff.”

Moments like these remind you of when life felt less alienated, when your worth felt less directly tied to your earning potential.

I'm sure it's an indication of my general failure to take seriously the normally accepted terms of grown-up life, but the fact that these record stores were so rich in social capital definitely gave me the sense—*ridiculously, absurdly, maybe even offensively*—that if things really hit the wall in Seattle, I could conceivably be happy in Spokane.

Also, I spent about \$250 combined at the four shops. (Research!)

A RECORD STORE IS A TASTEMAKER

Everyone agrees that for many years the only store in town worth a damn was 4000 Holes, established in 1989 by Bob Gallagher. It's a classic second city record store, shelves packed with new and used CDs and vinyl, and walls crowded with memorabilia related to Gallagher's Beatles obsession—hence the store's name (as in “in Blackburn, Lancashire”). Having weathered the long downturn of the retail music biz, Gallagher is now enjoying the upswing, and is bullish about business. “It's more than I can handle,” he says. “Almost!” The store is crowded with people at 11 a.m. on a Friday.

“Things are going well here, and in Spokane in general,” Gallagher says ebulliently. “You can tell because this is what I call the luxury economy. I don't sell anything that anyone actually needs, but it's all very important to me, and to my customers. The fact that we're doing so well is a great indicator.”

In 2014, David Thoren moved from Seattle to Spokane to open Groove Merchants, a small, well-appointed shop that specializes in used vinyl and high-end used stereo gear. He tells me that he made a kind of pilgrimage to 4000 Holes to seek Gallagher's blessing before encroaching on his turf. Gallagher blessed him, and the two enjoy a mutually beneficial coexistence.

A year later came Resurrection Records, a highly specialized (which is to say small, but very good) shop in a tiny, 150-square-foot space. After stints in Los Angeles, Seattle, Portland, and Austin, Mike Roberts tells me he chose Spokane to hang out his shingle for two reasons: It's close to where his mom lives and “you can afford to live and work here without killing yourself.”

JJ Wandler, owner of the Greenwood French restaurant Gainsbourg, moved back to Spokane two years ago under circumstances that will be either familiar or chilling to every longtime Seattle resident: After living for several years in a two-bedroom house in Wallingford for which rent was \$1,300 a month, he received word that the owners had sold to condo developers, and he and his wife would have to move. When they couldn't find a comparable place for less than \$2,500 a month, he looked around and realized that, in addition to the standard complaints about Seattle—“rents, traffic”—there was a larger absence opening up in the city he had called home for nearly 20 years. “Honestly,” he recalls, “I just felt like every place that I loved and enjoyed in my time there was disappearing.”

So they took the radical step of moving away, first to Sequim, and then to Spokane, where Wandler had gone to college (and cut his record-collector teeth picking through the crates at 4000 Holes).

A few minutes outside town, they found a four bedroom, 3,000-square-foot mid-century A-frame house on four acres, “with wild turkeys that come into the yard and even a couple of deer.” The rent is \$1,300 a month.

Soon after moving back, Wandler opened Garageland, a very selective record store/memorabilia emporium that also has an excellent bar and kitchen. As fate had it, it turned into a bar/restaurant that also sells great records. It's going well, but, because it's a combination of retail and restaurant businesses, he explains, “it's feast or famine.” (The night I spent there was pretty feast.)

Still, Wandler is excited by the influx of money and energy he sees coming into Spokane. But more than that, he's glad to be able to contribute to the local music culture that the four record stores are helping promote, each in its own way: “I really feel that having new music come into a town and having a meeting place influences a generation of musicians and music listeners,” he says. “I mean, I know music is online, but... It's different when you have a place to go. A record store is a tastemaker to a certain extent. I'm really happy to be bringing cool music into this city.” ■

THE
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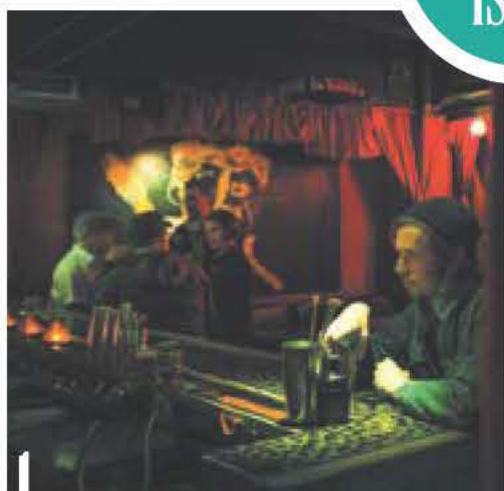
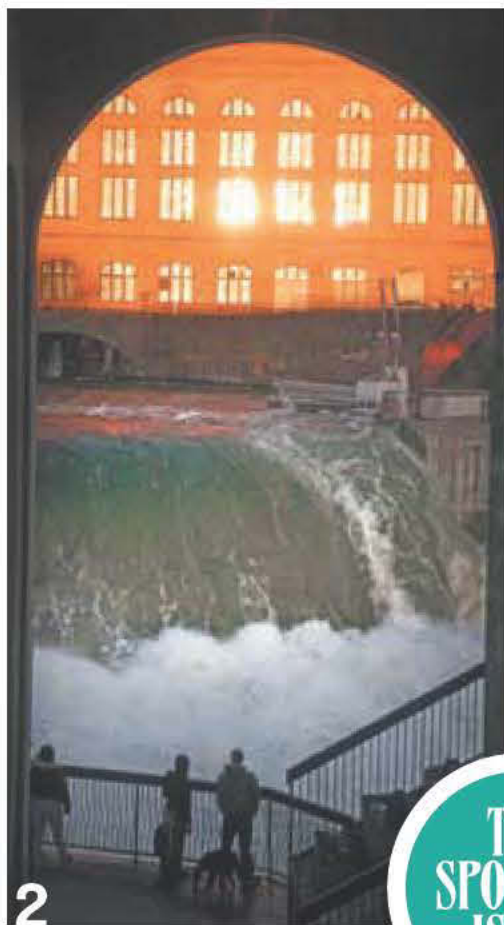
BOOKS

Spokane Is for Book Lovers

A Guide to the Literary Landmarks of a City Most People Have Sort of Heard Of

BY RICH SMITH

PHOTOS BY RAJAH BOSE



Spokane is a railroad town, a river town, a college basketball town, and a town of transcendently good ginger-molasses cookies. But it's also a literary oasis.

The Spokaneites I talked to more or less all tell the same story: The literary scene in Spokane is blooming. There's lots of new energy here (thanks, low cost of living!), people are using that energy to write books and participate in performance poetry events, and everyone supports everyone else's projects. The writing program at Eastern Washington University helps, as well as writers who blow up but stay put.

If/when you ever visit, check out these historical and contemporary landmarks that have nourished and continue to nourish those endeavors. Like the town itself, the stories behind these places are wilder than you might imagine.



THE
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1

Baby Bar
827 W First Ave

Cinematic genius David Lynch used to drink here, but the only thing that matters is a story that hometown author-hero Jess Walter (*We Live in Water*, *Citizen Vince*) told me about that time he tailed Evel Knievel all the way to this bar.

"I was a police reporter, and a cop told me they were investigating Evel Knievel as part of a cocaine trafficking ring centered on the old Ridpath Hotel," he wrote. "Evel had a Aston Martin sports car, and I'd see it parked in front of downtown bars along Sprague [Avenue]. So one night, I tailed him from bar to bar with a friend of mine. There was a bartender named Reba at the Baby Bar who would sing Patsy Cline songs into the soda dispenser, and I sat with Evel and a buddy of mine and we drank and drank and watched her sing to us. We drank so much, I forgot all about tailing Evel. Reba later died, fell off a cliff in Canada with her boyfriend. Evel never got arrested in the cocaine investigation."

2

Spokane Falls
Downtown

Novelist Sharma Shields (*The Sasquatch Hunter's Almanac*) says the falls "featured hugely in both Jess Walter's first work of fiction, *Over Tumbled Graves*, and Nance Van Winckel's poetry collection *Pacific Walkers*." She adds that many local poets and writers have been inspired by both the darkness and the power of the river.

Paths running alongside the falls put visitors well within misting distance of both the overhang and the plunge pool. (I saw a big splash leap over the barrier wall and soak a little girl in pink sweats. She laugh-cried.) Because you can get so close, your body fills with the river's roar after only two or three minutes of staring at the water rushing over the cliff.

3

Sherman's Spiral Poem
"That Place Where
Ghosts of Salmon Jump"
On a platform in Overlook Park

According to Allie Todd at Spokane Historical, this poem is "written in its entirety on a polished granite spiral set in concrete, right at the spot where Alexie was inspired to write it." The spot overlooks Spokane Falls. In the poem, Alexie's speaker tells the Spokane Indian origin story of the falls and expresses profound anger about the recklessness of white men: "Look at all of this, / and tell me that concrete ever equals love, Coyote, / these white men sometimes forget to love their own mothers / so how could they love this river which gave birth / to a thousand lifetimes of salmon?"

Heavy construction surrounding Riverfront Park prevented me from seeing and reading the poem, which seems a little on the nose.

4

**Vachel Lindsay's
Room at the Historic
Davenport Hotel**
10 S Post St

Despite my advanced degrees in literature, I only sort of knew that Vachel Lindsay was a canonical American poet. So when Washington State poet laureate (and Spokaneite) Tod Marshall told me Lindsay lived at the Historic Davenport Hotel for five years, I thought, "Oh, huh, I thought that guy was French." But after talking about the famous/infamous poet with the Davenport's concierge, Marshall, I wanted to read everything I could by and about the man.

The concierge and I were in the elevator headed up to see Lindsay's old room, when suddenly he turned to me and said, in the tone of a British spy, "Surely you've heard about his porcelain dolls?"

I hadn't!

"Well," he went on, "the man owned two [toddler-size] porcelain dolls, and he demanded they be sat and served at the restaurant. Mr. Davenport accommodated Mr. Lindsay's request for nearly a year, but unfortunately Lindsay had to be cordially evicted."

Lindsay didn't end up on the street. He found a home in Browne's Addition, the first residential neighborhood in Spokane, and lived there until he died. But while at the hotel, he wrote many poems and occasionally met with a very young Spokane poet, Carolyn Kizer.

5

Spark Central
1214 W Summit Parkway

On the other side of the river, Spark Central sits in a gleaming new development called Kendall Yards, which is named for the railroad tracks that used to be there. The place is a playground for famous writers and a fertile ground for emerging ones. "Think Hugo House meets 826 meets library, and throw in a bunch of robots for good measure," said Kate Lebo, former Seattleite and current Spark Central board member.

Check out fiction and poetry from local writers in the stacks, show up for a reading, or take some writing classes for adults on the cheap. A poetry-writing class with the city's poet laureate, Laura Read, might cost \$40.

They have reading parties and writing parties. Writers of all ages, executive director Brooke Matson says, camp out and listen to live music while they tackle their novels or poems. Parents can write with their kids or let them play with the robots (!) in a little high-tech workshop in the corner. It's pretty magical.

6

**Sherman Alexie's First
Apartment**
S Jefferson Dr

In this big white house converted into apartments near downtown Spokane, Sherman Alexie wrote major works of fiction, including the short-story collection *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, which launched his career: Look through the far right window on the top floor and you'll see his first apartment. He wrote *Lone Ranger* and *First Indian on the Moon* there. Then he moved across the hall into a bigger space, where he wrote *Reservation Blues*. That's the far left window. He wrote all those books on a Brother word processor. If you don't know what a "Brother" is, google it and weep.

He's a stay-at-home writer. "I have never been a coffee shop guy," Alexie said. "And I was too poor to be a coffee shop guy even if I wanted to be."

7

Atticus Coffee & Gifts
222 N Howard St

Excellent coffee shop attached to a gift shop that sells coffee and books. Young-adult novelist and former high-school English teacher Kris Dinnison (*You and Me and Him*) owns the place with her husband, Andy. She worked at the cafe full-time while writing her book, and she says that pieces of conversations and characters from Atticus definitely made it into the book.

The cafe attracts a lot of writers. Local YA authors Trent Reedy and Stephanie Oakes write here. Jess Walter wrote here on occasion until he moved to his new spot, which I will not blow up in these pages. Poet and professor Dan Butterworth still writes here, and poet Jonathan Johnson was writing on the patio during my visit.

8

Auntie's Bookstore
402 W Main Ave


This indie bookstore has been serving Spokane's readers since 1978, but it's lived in this large, airy, balustrade-intensive spot since 1993. It can be hard to convince authors to stop by on a tour, but their inland location hasn't prevented cool shit from happening. Owner John Waite told me that in 2004, after reading at the store for Spokane's excellent Get Lit series, Kurt Vonnegut pied-pipered an impromptu bar crawl around downtown. A woman fainted here while listening to Chuck Palahniuk read from his grotesque book of shorts stories, *Haunted*. Antonio Banderas and Viggo Mortensen shopped here when they were working on movies.


The store is charming and barn-like. Used and new books mingle in the stacks. There's a huge game store inside of it, a remnant of its early life as the Book and Game Company in 1978. If you want comics, the warm and knowledgeable booksellers will tell you to head down the street to Merlyn's Comics and Games. A few decades ago, you might have seen fantasy writer David Eddings there, flipping through the new arrivals.

Bookseller and Buddhist minister in training Melissa Opel, who has worked at the store for more than 10 years, calls Auntie's an "oasis." She's right. ■


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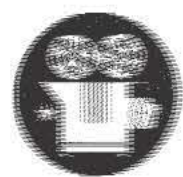
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THE
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ISSUE

Spokane's Thriving Film Industry Is Threatened by Dumb Austerity

A Conversation with Spokane-Based Producer, Director, and Film Activist Juan Mas

BY CHARLES MUDEDE

In 2006, Washington started a \$3.5 million tax initiative, the Motion Picture Competitiveness Program, to encourage the production of films, TV shows, and commercials. It was a great success. As *Seattle* magazine pointed out in a 2011 story, "Washington Loses Its Film-Incentive Program," the program supported 71 projects, 29 of which were feature films. Plus, the \$17.9 million handed out to the film industry by the state during this period generated \$69 million in economic activity. Despite its obvious success, the program was chopped by Washington State representative Frank Chopp in 2011. And the city hit hardest by this cut was Spokane, which saw 40 percent of its crew base leave for Portland, Oregon. The film industry would have pretty much died in that town had the incentive not been restored a year later.

"When the incentive came back," explains Juan Mas, a longtime resident of Spokane, and a film entrepreneur, director, producer, and vice chair of Washington Filmworks, the organization that handles the incentive, "the goal was to land a TV series, because the TV industry is what makes the whole industry grow fast. And we wanted to grow fast. We had lost so much ground after the initiative sunsetted. After we landed *Z Nation*, we have seen the industry return to the point it was in 2010."

Z Nation, which first aired in 2014 on Syfy (and is now preparing for its fourth season, which is being shot in and around Spokane), is about zombies in a world after the world has ended. This is the story: Some kind of virus has killed almost everyone globally. And those who survived the virus must spend every waking moment avoiding being bitten by a zombie. But there is hope in these end times. There is a vaccine that can help humans remain human after being bitten by a zombie. No, it's not an original story—but that doesn't matter, because lots of people are buying it.

"Before the incentive was cut in 2011," explains Mas, "Spokane was averaging three to four films a year. These, true, weren't high-end films. They were middle of the road—\$5 million and under—and often going straight to DVD. But there were also some great films, like Wayne Wang's *A Thousand Years of Good Prayers*. So there were strong

independent movies along with action movies and Lifetime films. But the thing is this: When you have a TV show, people move and settle here in your city. It took years to rebuild this crew base, and we do not want to lose those people... And you know, it's not just about Spokane. People in the West Side [what Spokaneites call Western Washington]



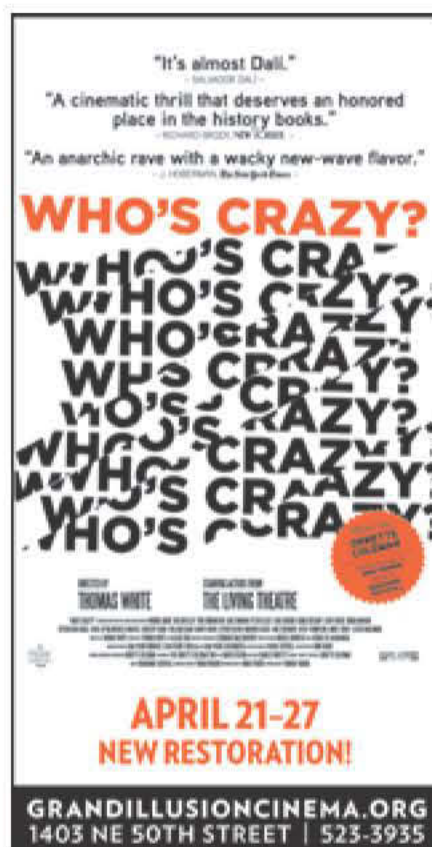
Z NATION Straight outta Spokane...

are involved in the production and also places like Index [Washington]. Some episodes were shot there. So the business from *Z Nation* has a statewide impact. And the reason they are here is the initiative."

The bad news is the initiative is sunseting yet again. It costs the state only \$3.5 million to do this one simple thing, which, due to what Keynesian economists call the "multiplier effect," brings into the state much, much more money than the state spends. But we live in a world where all solutions are solved by cuts, and none by investments. No one in power believes in investments anymore. It has to be austerity. In their world, a world that is not even capitalistic, no money is what money really wants. No money, in their thinking, makes money. Yes, this is pure madness.

"Losing the incentive will not only be a bad thing for Spokane, but for the state," says Mas. "You have to understand that the dollars being spent on *Z Nation*, which is shot primarily in Spokane, also go around the whole state, the West Side and towns in Central Washington. So the wealth is being shared across the state. Everyone wants the creation of jobs, and our incentive is a prime example of how an incentive should work, how it should be distributed, and how it grows an economy... Our film industry in Spokane is really booming again, and there are also a lot of people doing other film-related things, like web series and even a VR show. They are making those films here. We need to keep the incentive if we hope to continue growing."

The Motion Picture Competitiveness Program will sunset on June 30, 2017. ■



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CHOW

Durkin's Liquor Bar: A Group Review

Is the Fried Bologna Sandwich at Durkin's the Best Thing We Ate During Our Trip to Spokane?



PHOTOS BY RAJAH BOSE

Spokane, like the rest of America's cities, has undergone a foodie revolution. Business is booming, with 17 percent more restaurants since 2007, according to the Washington State Department of Revenue. We had planned to go to what is supposed to be the city's best restaurant, Ruins on North Monroe Street, but its small dining room didn't have the capacity to handle a larger party, the line was already long at 6:30 p.m. on a Friday, and Sean Nelson was hangry.

While we stood on the sidewalk and debated whether to wait it out or join Heidi Groover and Rich Smith at Durkin's Liquor Bar downtown, a group of people left Ruins, clearly upset. "This place is trash," said a man with long blond hair. "The food is trash, the service is trash. Don't go there."

Our stomachs rumbled, we still had a 20-minute wait, and a decision was made: We were going to Durkin's, located on West Main Avenue, across the street from Auntie's Bookstore. Named after liquor tycoon Jimmy Durkin and located in one of his pre-Prohibition establishments, there was ample room for our large group. The place looked like a million other speakeasy-style bars you'd find in Seattle, New York, or Chicago: dark leather booths, tin ceiling, cocktails served in those adorable, petite cocktail glasses. Rich and Heidi were already halfway through their drinks, and we proceeded to order.

One of our guests explained that Durkin's had opened a few years before and was briefly the area's hot restaurant before it fizzled because the food wasn't so great. Several years later and with a new chef, Shaun Chambers, it had restored its reputation. We were able to order nearly everything on the menu, including the Durkin's meat and cheese board, the butcher's cut strip steak served with duck butter, an assortment of salads and sides, and,

most importantly, a fried bologna sandwich, which Sean, no longer hangry, proclaimed to be perfect. (TRICIA ROMANO)

DRINKS

Yesterday Today Amaro: First of all: great pun. Second of all: Though I cannot afford to drink this herby, earthy take on a black Manhattan (\$9) three days in a row, as its name suggests, I would certainly want to. It was nicely balanced but still powerful. Though only one of its ingredients boasts much authority, one coupe made me—six foot two, 175 pounds, medium-heavy drinker—tipsy for the whole dinner. (RICH SMITH)

Black Friday: I guess we've reached a point in our civilization where we can put "activated charcoal" in our cocktails and that's okay. In fact, it's more than okay; the charcoal adds a gritty, earthy texture to this tall, dark, and handsome vodka drink (\$11). Also infused with lime, ginger, and honey, the real winner in this drink is the splash of beet syrup—naturally sweet and not too overpowering. (AMBER CORTES)

FOOD

Butcher's Cut of the Night, House Fries, Duck Butter: It was a steak. The thing about steaks is that you might be able to prepare yours better at home for far less money (\$34). The piece of strip was enormous (eight ounces) and a perfectly cooked medium-rare, which is more difficult to achieve than you'd think—charred on the outside and just the right amount of pink on the inside. However, it was strangely lacking in flavor. Maybe it wasn't salted enough, but the duck butter didn't add much to the experience, other than the knowledge that I would have to put in several extra hours at Orangetheory Fitness over the weekend. (TR)

Durkin's Board, House Smoked and Cured Charcuterie, Cheese, Fruit, Madeleine's Baguette: You can't reinvent the wheel with a meat and cheese board, but you do expect it to meet a certain standard: Give me enough bread to pair with the cheese, meat, and accoutrements, or I will be disappointed. In this, they succeeded: The bread came from Madeleine's, a bakery that is also run by Durkin's owners, and was lightly grilled. The rest of it—save for roasted red peppers that paired nicely with the bread—was serviceable but not amazing. (TR)

Fish and Chips: Finding myself in a landlocked river town and looking for something I just couldn't find at home, I went for the Rainier-battered fish and chips (\$16). The batter was light but crispy; the inside perfectly moist. Served on a plate of just-right house cut fries (see below) with a side of rémoulade, it was—I'm sorry, Seattle—as good as anything you'll find at Pike Place. (HEIDI GROOVER)

Brussels Sprouts: Roasted and served with too much sauce, the first taste of these brussels sprouts (\$8) was surprising. In addition to brown sugar and bourbon, the sauce also contained sriracha, which gave the sprouts a much spicier bite than I was anticipating. A little less of the sauce and the spice would have done more for the green. (TR)

House Cut Fries with Garlic Aioli: These were good fries (\$6). The perfect size and not too oily. But the garlic aioli made me burp garlic all night. Not great for my Tinder date later. (TR)

Oxtail: Diced and fried purple sweet potato provided a nice contrast to the tender oxtail (\$25), while oyster mushrooms soaked in oxtail jus delicately reinforced the slightly ▶

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◀ gamey meat. I bristle when asked to pay double digits for cheap cuts I can toss in the crock pot myself, but after a long day walking all around Spokane, this big warm bowl of something satisfied. (RS)

Scallops: There's a decadence to scallops that few other shellfish can match. Of course, there are oysters, but my heart has always been with the heavenly tenderness of scallops. In this dish (\$27), they were given their proper due—set atop a mild smoked cauliflower puree, served with steamed Swiss chard, and sprinkled with delightful diced bacon bits and crushed pistachios to balance out the softness with some crunch. (AC)

Beet Salad: This salad (\$12) was the best thing I put in my mouth all night. The sweetness of the thinly sliced beets paired well with the creamy-smoky blue cheese and the peppery arugula. Pickled onions and a horseradish vinaigrette kept the dish bright and peppery. (RS)

Fried Bologna Sandwich: Some people's palates refine with age. As I inch ever closer to the death I know is now approaching me at a gallop, I find that the gustatory delights of childhood are the only foods that bring any comfort at all. The indisputable fact that these

treats only hasten the approach of the grim reaper is an irony that isn't lost on me. It only makes savoring the empty calories all the more important. You can always have some salutary greens when you feel your body running down. But you didn't come to Spokane to eat a fucking salad. When confronted with the existence on a menu of a fried bologna sandwich on white bread with yellow cheese and yellow mustard (\$16), it would feel perverse not to order it, and revel in the obvious envy of your tablemates, even as you are transported backward through history—fruit rolls and cans of SpaghettiOs (with sliced franks) hurtling past you, en route to that eternal kitchen table of the unconscious, where eating disorders sprout like dandelions on a freshly mowed front lawn. To its credit, this restaurant made no effort to modernize the sandwich, piling the weird, delicious meat high and frying it up good. (Small note: The edges could have been crispier. Second small note: Spelling it "bologna" is a just *little* rococo, n'est-ce pas? Let baloney be baloney.) No Dijon mustard, no aioli, no hard crust or weird bits in the bread. In its small, hard-to-defend way, this is a perfect sandwich and a pure source of pleasure, both despite and because it catalyzes the hardening of your wizened arteries. PS. It comes with tater tots, as all entrées should. (SEAN NELSON) ■

A Ginger-Molasses Cookie Conundrum

BY RICH SMITH



RICH SMITH

Madeleine's Cafe & Patisserie has a startlingly baby-blue French-style storefront that was charming and bright enough to pierce through the heavy fog of my hangover (thanks, Baby Bar!), and also to stand out among its dun-colored neighboring stores on Main Avenue. Besides the sky, the cafe was the only other bright-blue thing I'd seen since I arrived in Spokane, which seemed meaningful considering the town's generally dusty-orange hue.

Once inside, I was confronted by a case of French pastries and a refrigerated case of microwavable breakfasty items. My hangover selected the quiche lorraine and home-style potatoes (the former ended up being spongy, the latter too fried), but my heart selected a ginger-molasses cookie.

This cookie looked unlike any ginger-molasses cookie I'd ever seen. The top of it appeared to be a drought field of baked earth dolloped with pools of white crystallized sugar. It looked crunchy-chewy rather than chewy-chewy like its cookie cousins. It was, however, many dollars. I didn't care. I bought it.

The cookie was what it purported to be. It was crunchy-chewy. Subtle in its gingeriness

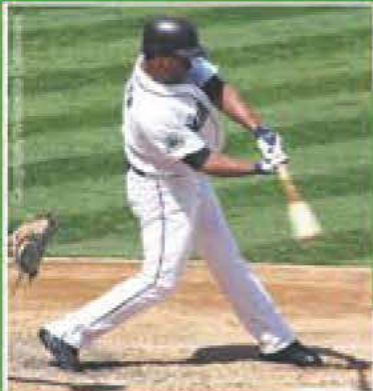
but not too powerful in its sugariness. It was beautiful.

I left Madeleine's pleased with what I thought was a quintessentially Spokaneite ginger-molasses cookie experience. But then, a few hours later, I found myself staring down a stack of ginger-molasses chocolate-chip (!!) cookies in a glass jar at Atticus Coffee & Gifts.


These cookies looked pillowy-chewy, darkly wonderful—almost healthy. I was initially offended but then subsequently aroused by the bold synthesis of chocolate and ginger. This ginger cookie *had* to be better than the ginger cookie I'd eaten earlier. I'd been cheated, as Frank O'Hara says, of some marvelous experience.

But rather than taint my desire with knowledge, I allowed the ginger-molasses chocolate-chip cookie to enter the marbled realm of pure possibility, the only place where perfection lives.

Of all the lessons I learned on my day-and-a-half-long sojourn to Spokane, the lesson that the best cookie is the cookie you don't eat sank into my soul the deepest. I don't mean that in any kind of pro-ana way. I just mean I'm never moving to Spokane. It's perfectly fine without me. ■



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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

BY ROB BREZSNY

For the Week of April 19

ARIES (March 21–April 19): After George Washington was elected as the first president of the United States, he had to move from his home in Virginia to New York City, which was the center of the American government. But there was a problem: He didn't have enough cash on hand to pay for his long-distance relocation, so he was forced to scrape up a loan. Fortunately, he was resourceful and persistent in doing so. The money arrived in time for him to attend his own inauguration. I urge you to be like Washington in the coming weeks, Aries. Do whatever's necessary to get the funds you need to finance your life's next chapter.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20): Fantasize about sipping pear nectar and listening to cello music and inhaling the aroma of musky amber and caressing velvet, cashmere, and silk. Imagine how it would feel to be healed by inspiring memories and sweet awakenings and shimmering delights and delicious epiphanies. I expect experiences like these to be extra available in the coming weeks. But they won't necessarily come to you freely and easily. You will have to expend effort to ensure they actually occur. So be alert for them. Seek them out. Track them down.

GEMINI (May 21–June 20): Contagion may work in your favor, but it could also undermine you. On the one hand, your enthusiasm is likely to ripple out and inspire people whose help you could use. On the other hand, you might be more sensitive than usual to the obnoxious vibes of manipulators. But now that I've revealed this useful tip, let's hope you will be able to maximize the positive kind of contagion and neutralize the negative. Here's one suggestion that may help: Visualize yourself to be surrounded by a golden force field that projects your good ideas far and wide even as it prevents the disagreeable stuff from leaking in.

CANCER (June 21–July 22): A reader named Kris X sent me a rebuke. "You're not a guru or a shaman," he sneered. "Your horoscopes are too filled with the slippery stench of poetry to be useful for spiritual seekers." Here's my response: "Thank you, sir! I don't consider myself a guru or a shaman. It's not my mission to be an all-knowing authority who hands down foolproof advice. Rather, I'm an apprentice to the Muse of Curiosity. I like to wrestle with useful, beautiful paradoxes. My goal is to be a joyful rebel stirring up benevolent trouble, to be a cheerleader for the creative imagination." So now I ask you, my fellow Cancerian: How do you avoid getting trapped in molds that people pressure you to fit inside? Are you skilled at being yourself even if that's different from what's expected of you? What are the soulful roles you choose to embody despite the fact that almost no one understands them? Now is a good time to meditate on these matters.

LEO (July 23–Aug 22): In the coming weeks, there will be helpers whose actions will nudge you—sometimes inadvertently—toward a higher level of professionalism. You will find it natural to wield more power, and you will be more effective in offering your unique gifts. Now maybe you imagine you have already been performing at the peak of your ability, but I bet you will discover—with a mix of alarm and excitement—that you can become even more excellent. Be greater, Leo! Do better! Live stronger! (P.S.: As you ascend to this new level of competence, I advise you to be humbly aware of your weaknesses and immaturities. As your doubt rises, you can't afford to indulge in self-delusions.)

VIRGO (Aug 23–Sept 22): I love to see you Virgos flirt with the uncharted and the uncanny and the indescribable. I get thrills and chills whenever I watch your fine mind trying to make sense of the fabulous and the foreign and the unfathomable. What other sign can cozy up to exotic wonders and explore forbidden zones with as much non-nonsense pragmatism as you? If anyone can capture greased lightning in a bottle or get a hold of magic beans that actually work, you can.

LIBRA (Sept 23–Oct 22): A friend told me about a trick used by his grandmother, a farmer. When her brooding hens stopped laying eggs, she would put them in pillowcases that she then hung from a clothesline in a stiff breeze. After the hens got blown around for a while, she returned them to their cozy digs. The experience didn't hurt them, and she swore it put them back on track with their egg laying. I'm not comfortable with this strategy. It's too extreme for an animal lover like myself. (And I'm glad I don't have to deal with recalcitrant hens.) But maybe it's an apt metaphor or poetic prod for your use right now. What could you do to stimulate your own creative production?

SCORPIO (Oct 23–Nov 21): Now would be an excellent time to add deft new nuances to the ways you kiss, lick, hug, snuggle, caress, and fondle. Is there a worthy adventurer who will help you experiment with these activities? If not, use your pillow, your own body, a realistic life-size robot, or your imagination. This exercise will be a good warm-up for your other assignment, which is to upgrade your intimacy skills. How might you do that? Hone and refine your abilities to get close to people. Listen deeper, collaborate stronger, compromise smarter, and give more. Do you have any other ideas?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22–Dec 21): "If I had nine hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend the first six sharpening my ax," said Abraham Lincoln, one of America's most productive presidents. I know you Sagittarians are more renowned for your bold, improvisational actions than your careful planning and strategic preparation, but I think the coming weeks will be a time when you can and should adopt Lincoln's approach. The readier you are, the freer you'll be to apply your skills effectively and wield your power precisely.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22–Jan 19): Zoologists say that cannibalizing offspring is common in the animal kingdom, even among species that care tenderly for their young. So when critters eat their kids, it's definitely "natural." But I trust that in the coming weeks, you won't devour your own children. Nor, I hope, will you engage in any behavior that metaphorically resembles such an act. I suspect that you may be at a low ebb in your relationship with some creation or handwork or influence that you generated out of love. But please don't abolish it, dissolve it, or abandon it. Just the opposite, in fact: Intensify your efforts to nurture it.

AQUARIUS (Jan 20–Feb 18): Your astrological house of communication will be the scene of substantial clamor and ruckus in the coming weeks. A bit of the hubbub will be flashy but empty. But much of it should be pretty interesting, and some of it will even be useful. To get the best possible results, be patient and objective rather than jumpy and reactive. Try to find the deep codes buried inside the mixed messages. Discern the hidden meanings lurking within the tall tales and reckless gossip. If you can deal calmly with the turbulent flow, you will give your social circle a valuable gift.

PISCES (Feb 19–March 20): The best oracular advice you'll get in the coming days probably won't arise from your dreams or an astrological reading or a session with a psychic, but rather by way of seemingly random signals, like an overheard conversation or a sign on the side of a bus or a scrap of paper you find lying on the ground. And I bet the most useful relationship guidance you receive won't be from an expert, but maybe from a blog you stumble upon or a barista at a cafe or one of your old journal entries. Be alert for other ways this theme is operating, as well. The usual sources may not have useful info about their specialties. Your assignment is to gather up accidental inspiration and unlikely teachings. ■

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PERSON OF INTEREST

THE
SPOKANE
ISSUE

Luke Baumgarten and Ginger Ewing

TEXT BY AMBER CORTES
PHOTO BY RAJAH BOSE

.....
Luke Baumgarten and Ginger Ewing both grew up around Spokane, moved away, and then moved back to the city they loved to start their careers—Ewing was a forensic anthropologist, and Baumgarten is a writer. But they started a community instead.

Together and with others, Baumgarten and Ewing cofounded Terrain in 2008, an arts organization dedicated to keeping talent in Spokane. They've thrown yearly art parties in abandoned buildings, created Bazaar, an art marketplace for emerging artists to sell their work, and fueled the economic development of culture and creativity in Spokane. Now Terrain has found a more permanent home in the old Washington Cracker Co. Building. Amid the old brick walls covered with peeling white paint, the couple's creative empire boasts an art gallery, a

performance stage, and Fellow, a new co-working space started by Baumgarten.

We sat down to talk about their hopes and dreams for their home city, what's up with Spokane's love/hate relationship with Seattle, and the best things to see and do if you're in town.

Why did you start Terrain?

Ginger: For decades now, Spokane people have told ourselves this narrative that if we're going to be successful in our 20s, we're going to do it in any city but Spokane. And we found ourselves really passionate about Spokane, wanting to have some sort of say on the hemorrhaging of our young and creative people.

Luke: They would say things like "I'm getting too good for Spokane. I need to go find my community elsewhere," like there was no possibility that a community could be created here. And so we just needed to bring them together and make them realize it's worth being here.

How would you describe Spokane's... ambivalent attitude toward Seattle?

Ginger: I had really mixed feelings about coming to this interview, and I feel like it stems from decades of Seattleites disregarding anything that happens east of the I-5 corridor. So I have—had—this deep suspicion about *The Stranger's* motives for wanting to do a piece about Spokane, period, and why now?

And we are finally at a point where I don't even like to mention Portland and Seattle anymore, because we're not Portland and Seattle—and that's a really fucking good thing.

Where do you see Spokane in 10 years?

Luke: I want Spokane to be considered the cultural hub of the Cascades to the Rockies. I want Spokane to be the headwaters of a watershed of the culture of the interior Northwest. And I want Terrain to have as big a part of that as we possibly can, without killing ourselves.

A Seattleite has 24 hours to visit Spokane. What's on their must-see-and-do list?

Luke: The parks, especially downtown, Riverfront Park and Huntington Park and Manito Park. I think you've got to catch a show at the Bartlett. Richmond Art Collective is cool, and the Laboratory, an interactive arts space and residency, and Saranac Art Projects.

Ginger: You need to go shop at Fringe & Fray. You need to eat or have a cocktail at Ruins. Santé, Garageland, the Wandering Table, Hogwash. Go to Barrister and have a glass of wine. We also have a lot of great junking stores, so Boulevard Mercantile and Tossed and Found are two really good ones.

If you could fix one thing about Spokane with a magic wand, what would it be?

Luke: I would wave a magic wand and make us believe in ourselves a little bit more. And dream a little bigger than we traditionally have. ■

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